

# CRESCENDO

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# CRESCENDO

A  
BUSINESS MAN'S ROMANCE  
IN MUSIC

By G SHARP MAJOR *epseud.*



WINNIPEG, CANADA

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## AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

This story of the first nineteen years (1915-1934) in the life of the Men's Musical Club of Winnipeg is in response to inquiries from many parts of this continent regarding the Club and its activities. It does not pretend to be a record of the vital part played by the many members who have combined to make the influence of the Club what it is. Such names as are mentioned are only introduced because of their association with some feature of the moment. A complete rostrum would constitute a well-filled "Who's Who" of musical Winnipeg. If the reader derives a fraction of the pleasure in its perusal which the author has enjoyed in its preparation, this narrative will have more than answered its purpose.





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MUSIC AND ARTS BUILDING

## CHAPTER I

### MOTIF

JOSEPH TEES AND ANOTHER — FOUNDED THE CLUB — OBJECTS --  
MUSIC IN WINNIPEG IN 1915-1916.

One wintry evening towards the end of November in the year 1915, a middle-aged commonplace sort of individual was wending his way homeward along Portage Avenue. It was after ten o'clock, for he had been working late at the office, trade being brisk that year on account of the record wheat yield in the West.

It was the age of gramophones and player-pianos, and, about a year previously, he had bought one of the former, and had formed a warm friendship with the department manager of the music store, Joseph M. Tees (Joe).

Seeing the store still lit up, with Joe's figure plainly discernible, apparently alone, he knocked on the door and quickly secured admittance and a welcome from Joe, with whom he was soon discussing records and recordings in the exercise of that discriminating selectivity which had possessed him since he bought that machine.

His musical knowledge was limited and amateurish, but inwardly he was rebelling against the preponderance of unattractive popular music that was being recorded, as well as against the type of music that seemed to satisfy the aspirations of his limited circle of acquaintances.

"Look here, Joe" said he, "would there be any way of getting some kindred spirits together in a Club or Society for the purpose of

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making and listening to music they like? They would not be Carusos, Kreislers, nor Paderewskis, but after all the music's the thing."

"There is something in the idea," replied Joe reflectively, and one could see his optimistic imagination kindling.

"We had a Club in my home town," continued the visitor, "which fostered periodical musical recitals among the members, and, on occasion, brought well-known performers from London. The meetings were rather exclusive, and it was a privilege to be invited to attend as a guest. Once a month or thereby ladies could be introduced as guests."

"I do believe," said Joe, "that there are men here feeling just as you do and they might respond."

"All right, let's try it out," was the reply, "I know very few people in town outside of business acquaintances, but you have contact with some of those who might be interested. Will you take the initiative and arrange for some kind of a meeting?"

By this time Joe was riding the clouds, and there were all kinds of visions in his eye. He readily agreed, and, as he knew lots of people more or less interested in music, and everybody in music knew Joe, the notices calling a meeting were in the mail within a few days.

In the meantime, he had been busy broaching the idea to every friend he met, and when, on the evening of Saturday, December 11th 1915, the meeting in the Fort Garry Hotel was called to order, there were over forty men present. Joe was keenly enthusiastic and in his element and was easily persuaded to take the chair and "tell them all about it." And he could be relied upon to paint the picture! The subsequent speakers included W. H. Anderson, Dr. Ralph Horner, J. E. Hughes, J. J. Moncrieff, A. L. Scott, F. C. S. Turner, and others, and it was soon apparent that it was only a matter of ways and means.

It is a strange point that the minutes do not disclose that any formal motion to organize a Club was made. The record states that "The Chairman put the question before those present as to their desire for organization, which was found to be unanimous." It is



## MOTIF

ingenuous, but evidently Joe interpreted the sympathetic reception of the scheme shown by the various speakers as reflecting his own enthusiasm, and he "put the question!" In the absence, therefore, of any formal motion, the honour of being recognized as the founder of the Men's Musical Club can deservedly be accorded to Joe Tees, who personally took the initiative in arranging and handling the organization meeting and subsequently in being its first Secretary.

It required another meeting, a week later, to complete a working plan of operation, but it is definitely established that the Club was organized and founded in the Fort Garry Hotel on Saturday, December 11th, 1915. The first officers were:

*President*, VERY REV. DEAN COOMBS.

*Vice-Presidents*, DR. RALPH HORNER and R. WATKIN MILLS.

*Secretary*, JOSEPH M. TEES.

*Treasurer*, FRED C. N. KENNEDY.

It is sad to realize that these are now but a memory, they all having gone to that "undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns," but the Club and Winnipeg will never cease to revere their memory. The other members of the Business Committee were Dr. Swale Vincent, who four years later left the city for London where he lived until his death; Camille Couture, who moved shortly afterwards to Montreal; J. E. Hughes, who later made his home in Regina; John Waterhouse and W. H. Anderson.

There was some difference of opinion regarding the name by which the new organization should be known. One speaker suggested the "Music and Arts Club," another proposed the "Philharmonic Club," while a third declared for the present name, which was ultimately selected on a vote by a large majority. The final decision was inspired by a general desire to be recognized as the younger brother of an older sister, the "Women's Musical Club," and, as history has proved, no happier title could have been selected.

The objects of the Club as then drafted, adopted, and defined in the Constitution have so remained to this day, being embodied in the Charter granted to the Club in 1933 on its incorporation under

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the laws of the Province of Manitoba. They are worth reproducing here:

- (a) To hold periodical meetings for the purpose of mutual entertainment at which programmes of vocal and instrumental music, lectures, essays and discussions on musical topics may be rendered, given, and entered into, by members and guests of the Club.
- (b) To assist both individually and collectively, musicians of talent and merit resident in the Province of Manitoba.
- (c) To encourage and promote visits to the City of Winnipeg by distinguished artists and musical organizations, and to entertain visiting and local artists when occasion arises.
- (d) To encourage and assist any organization which may be inaugurated in the Province of Manitoba for the promotion, extension, or elevation of the art of music.
- (e) To disapprove of, discourage and condemn any scheme, act, or organization which in any way has a tendency to debase the standard of music in the Province of Manitoba.

There is no evidence that the sponsors of these few clauses had even the remotest idea of the road that the Club would travel, and one would tend to suspect the presence of some legal mind, preparing for all sorts of unforeseen contingencies, were it not for the fact that the sub-committee which drafted them consisted of W. H. Anderson, Dr. Ralph Horner, J. E. Hughes, A. L. Scott, Joseph M. Tees, and F. C. S. Turner. Not a lawyer among them! The most probable explanation is the Celtic imagination of Joe Tees. It is established, however, that some of the members had ideas that the Club might be able to exert an influence beyond the enjoyment of congenial fellowship fostered at regular weekly meetings. The newspaper report of the first of these meetings on January 1st, 1916, states that the Chairman, Dean Coombes, in welcoming the members to the initial recital of the Club, referred to the "excellent work to be done in the way of furthering the development of music in Winnipeg," and also to the "lack of a Public Hall," and expressed the hope that "it would

## MOTIF

not be long before we got one." The extent to which the Dean's exhortation has been followed, his hopes realized, and the part therein played by the Club, is a matter of history.

Before going further, however, it might be worth while to obtain a glimpse of musical life in Winnipeg in the winter of 1915-1916.

The great war was in its second year, and, like other wars, had effects on life that had nothing to do with war. The Red Cross, I.O.D.E., and other patriotic and charitable institutions, were very active, and the call for funds for these was insistent and recurring. So important and vital did these claims become that no concert of any kind, either by local people or by visitors, no matter how eminent, could hope to obtain recognition unless all, or a percentage of, the net returns was destined for patriotic purposes. The financial aspect was much more urgent than the musical, and audiences gradually came to contain a higher percentage of those who were persuaded to be present on account of the patriotic appeal, than of those who were interested in the musical content. This was inevitable, as the citizens of Winnipeg were never remiss in recognizing their obligations to these important war organizations.

There was also, however, the necessity of making programmes such as would continue to hold audiences, and induce their return to subsequent concerts, and, in consequence, there was a surfeit of what the newspapers described as the "menu of the ballad." Such audiences were bound also to include what the press stigmatized as that "nuisance of the concert room, the chatterbox." Rhynd Jamieson was responsible for the music department of the Free Press, and Chas. H. Wheeler was on the staff of the Tribune, and the former was typically outspoken. He inveighed against ladies "talking about clothes and hats," and of two men getting out during a number, making a noise stumbling over something, one of whom, obviously "intoxicated, kept up a continuous chatter about having something to drink," and remarking that "he hated being bored by such music."

Despite these drawbacks, the Winnipeg Oratorio Society under

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J. J. Moncrieff, and the Elgar Musical Society under Ernest E. Vinen, valiantly worked their hardest to keep the flag of high standard of music and performance flying. Two concerts by the latter in January and April, and presentations of the "Messiah" and "Judas Maccabeus" in January, as well as two concerts in May, by the Oratorio Society, were the major choral events that winter. There were visits from Katherine Goodson in October, the Cherniavskys in March, and Kathleen Parlow in April. The Horner Opera Co. staged "The Mikado," and the Women's Musical Club had a full schedule of afternoon musicales on Mondays from November to March. George Rutherford carried on his studio orchestra, and the Junior Musical Club functioned bravely. There were band concerts in the Walker Theater, Coliseum, and Pantages Theatre; Davidson Thomson appeared in recital, and intermittent scattered district concerts, all for patriotic purposes, were rife, in most parts of the city. Many of our young men had already gone overseas and many others were in training. Church choirs were severely handicapped by the drain on male voices, and this same difficulty was pressing also on the larger choral societies. In fact, it was only a year or two later that the Elgar Musical Society dropped its male section and functioned as a female voice choir.

This was the musical soil in which the new Club took root and came into being. How it blossomed and bore fruit is woven into the web of Winnipeg's musical history during the years that followed.

## CHAPTER II

### PRELUDE

#### FIRST RECITAL — GENESIS OF MALE VOICE CHOIR — MUSIC AND ARTS BUILDING.

The scope of the Club's activities may be divided into two clear periods. The first period, extending from its inception through the remaining years of the war, was, with the exception of its public assistance to patriotic organizations, entirely domestic and internal, although the seeds were being sown for that broader sphere of action which characterized its second period, and on which it entered in the spring of 1919.

In December 1915 the promoters of the Club were single-minded in their aims. Like the gramophone enthusiast their first desire was to meet with kindred souls to make and listen to some worth-while music for music's sake. That desire the executive met within a few days of their election. Arrangements were made to meet on Saturday evening in each week for the remainder of the winter in the Banqueting Hall of the Royal Alexandra Hotel, which would seem to have been so large as to threaten to overwhelm the feeling of companionship among such a relatively small coterie. But their enthusiasm was not so easily damped, and for the next four months they were happy and rich in a renewal of spirit.

The first meeting, as already mentioned, was held on January 1st, 1916, and so began this series of recitals which has since been successfully and continuously maintained every winter from

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October to March. In the following winter, after taking a referendum vote of the members, the recitals were given on Monday evenings, but in 1917-1918 a return to Saturday evenings was made, and on this night of the week they have remained. The programme given at that first recital is placed on record here:

VOCAL	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Recit. "I feel the Deity within"} \\ \text{Air "Arm, Arm Ye Brave"} \end{array} \right\}$	Judas Maccabeus. Handel
	R. WATKIN MILLS	
PIANO	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{"Tarantelle"} \\ \text{"Impromptu in F minor"} \end{array} \right\}$	<i>Leschetizky</i> <i>Schubert-Liszt</i>
	CYRIL RALPHRUL HOGG	
CELLO	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{"Harlequin"} \\ \text{"Harlequinade"} \end{array} \right\}$	<i>Popper</i>
	E. HUGH BALLY	
VOCAL	"Your King Needs You"	Capt. H. K. Jordan
	T. R. GRIFFITHS	

Mr. F. M. Gee accompanied Mr. Mills, and Mr. Griffiths was accompanied by the composer, who was to leave shortly for the seat of war.

The custom of making the last Saturday evening in each month "Ladies' Night" was inaugurated on the last Saturday of the first month of the Club's existence, and so, with extensions, it has remained. The date was January 29th, 1916, and that occasion marked the first appearance of a member of the gentler sex on the Club's programmes in the person of Miss Ruth Price, who was soon to leave Winnipeg to take up her residence in the east. The programme on this occasion is also given here:

	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{"B la F"} \\ \text{"Serenade a la Spagnola"} \\ \text{"Finale-allegro"} \end{array} \right\}$	<i>Rimsky-Korsakoff</i> <i>Borodine</i> <i>Glazounov</i>
STRING QUARTETS.		
JOHN WATERHOUSE, First Violin	ALEX. L. SCOTT, Second Violin	
GEO. H. WILLIAMS, Viola	E. HUGH BALLY, Violoncello	

## PRELUDE

	“The Moon Drops Low” . . . . .	Cadman
VOCAL . . .	“The Land of the Sky Blue Water” . . .	Cadman
	“Ah! Moon of My Delight” . . . . .	Lehmann
ROY WYDEMAN		
VIOLIN . . . . .	“Souvenir de Moscow” . . . . .	Wieniawski
RUTH PRICE		
PIANO . . . . .	“Polonaise Militaire in A flat” . . . . .	Chopin
CYRIL RALPHRUL HOGG		
VOCAL. . .	“When the King Went Forth to War. . .	Koeneman
	“So, Sir Page” (La Nozzi de Figaro) . . .	Mozart
R. WATKIN MILLS		
VIOLIN AND PIANO	“Sonata in F minor” . . . . .	Horner
JOHN WATERHOUSE and DR. RALPH HORNER		

In the first four months two actions were taken by the members which subsequently led the Club into that field of public service in which it became so active, and which constituted its second period referred to.

Prior to the founding of the Club, a quartet of male vocalists, all associated with a leading business firm in the city, had been enjoying themselves studying, and at times affording others some enjoyment in listening to, male voice part song music. George Price was the moving spirit, and the others were, Bob Marshall, Bill Saunders, and David Lofthouse. Just after the first recital of the Club, George Price suggested that they should extend this to a double quartet and make contributions to the Club's programmes. At the second recital this was enlarged into a suggestion for a small male choir, and a week later, on January 15th, 1916, the onus of organizing a male choral section of the Club was placed on the shoulders of George Price. Thus was taken the first step towards the establishment of the Winnipeg Male Voice Choir, which has since earned such an enviable reputation in Eastern Canada and the United States, a reputation which has also spread to the British Isles.

Simplicity pervaded the activities of the Club, and this choral

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group followed the same pattern. No record of proceedings in these first few months was kept; George Price was Conductor, Chairman, Secretary-Treasurer — a regular Pooh Bah in himself. The cost of music was met by subscriptions from the singers who, of course, were all members of the Club. At a meeting held in a down-town office on May 11th, 1916, a more formal note came into the group. George Price was elected Chairman and W. J. Saunders, Secretary-Treasurer, and a resolution was adopted requesting the Club formally to recognize the new "Male Voice Choir of the Men's Musical Club of Winnipeg."

George Price was an extraordinarily vital personality, and retained the affections of his choir in a remarkable way. No detail was too small for him. He personally tested every voice, knew every member intimately in a vocal sense, gave every man his position in the choir, kept the attendance register, selected the music and ordered it, kept his eyes and ears open for possible voices to strengthen the parts, and in fact did everything except keep the books and write the minutes (and on occasion he did this!) During that spring there was no accommodation available for rehearsals except in the homes of the members themselves, and it speaks volumes for the enthusiasm of the choir of about twenty-four members that it was able to appear with credit at the closing Club recital of the season on Saturday, April 29th, 1916, with George Price himself as conductor. Being the Choir's première, the numbers sung are not without interest.

"HYMN BEFORE ACTION" . . . . .	<i>Walford Davies</i>
"THE BELEAGUERED" . . . . .	<i>Sullivan</i>
"A VINTAGE SONG" (Loreley) . . . . .	<i>Mendelssohn</i>
"THE LONG DAY CLOSES" . . . . .	<i>Sullivan</i>

The Free Press in its next issue made the first press review of the Choir's singing:

"The programme was outstanding for the really creditable first appearance of the Male Voice Choir of the Club under the direction of Mr. Price. The Choir, numbering about twenty-four



## PRELUDE

voices, sang several items with appreciable ensemble effects and excellent regard for light and shade."

There is no actual record of the names of the members of that first choir. It can be stated that there are none of them singing with the Choir to-day, although several are still members of the Club, and, therefore, eligible to sing, if they have the time, and can satisfy the vocal ideas of the conductor!

The other event of far-reaching importance developed from a situation which occurred in connection with the recital scheduled for Saturday, February 5th. Arrangements had been made to hold the regular weekly meeting on that evening as usual, but, as the Hotel Banqueting Hall was required for what, to the authorities, seemed a more important gathering, the Club, on short notice, had to occupy the Gold Room in the Hotel. The programme arranged included a lecture by Dr. Swale Vincent on "The Beginnings of Music," and, as the Gold Room was not a suitable room in which to give lantern illustrations, the lecture had to be postponed, and it was given in the Physics Theatre of the University one week later.

The executive was immediately faced with the problem of obtaining quarters for the Club's meetings which would be secure against such disruptions, especially as programmes were being mapped out and prepared weeks in advance. Although no immediate change was made, and the Club continued to meet at the Royal Alexandra Hotel, negotiations were before long opened up with the Adanac Club. This Club had acquired, a few years previously, the residence of James H. Ashdown, at the corner of Broadway and Hargrave, and had made considerable alterations and additions thereto. The advent of the War, and, it is to be feared, of prohibition, had so adversely affected the membership that the premises were now too large for its purposes, and the directors expressed a willingness to lease part thereof. As a result of negotiations the Men's Musical Club was enabled by the end of May to rent from the Adanac Club two rooms on the second floor of that building as Club Rooms, to be open during the hours in which the

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Adanac Club was open, which virtually meant every day and all day. They also secured the use of the Club's Dining Room on the same floor for weekly recitals and choir rehearsals during the season.

The beginning of the 1916-1917 season, therefore, found the Club with assured, convenient, and suitable headquarters, and they were able to carry out a full season's schedule of recitals despite the fact that the membership of the Adanac Club continued to fall off, and that the directors were ever faced with the possibility of circumstances being so strong that they might be compelled to close the building. In fact by the end of the winter it was clear that they could not carry on through another winter.

The way was now open for the consummation of the next important step taken in carrying out the objects for which the Men's Musical Club had been formed. A committee consisting of F. C. S. Turner, John Parton, and the Secretary, was appointed to approach the directors of the Adanac Club, and work out some plan whereby the building could continue to be operated. The final result was that in the summer of 1917 the Music and Arts Co. Ltd. was incorporated, under the laws of the Province of Manitoba, and capital to the amount of \$1500.00 approximately was subscribed, the shareholders being practically all members of the Club. This company obtained a lease of the entire premises of the Adanac Club, renamed it the Music and Arts Building, and, after a few minor interior alterations were made, converted the building into a specialized music centre for the city. As such it functioned and flourished. There was a transfer of ownership in 1933 which changed the management structure, but the Club continued to have its headquarters there. Technically the Club rented what space it required from the Music and Arts Co. but the Company really operated to provide a home for the Club. A number of the rooms and offices were equipped as teachers' studios, the dining room was converted into an admirable Recital Hall, which was not only available for the Club's seasonal recitals, and for choir rehearsals, but also rentable for teachers' Pupil Recitals and meetings of all kinds. For a time it was in great demand for dances. The lounge room of the Adanac

## PRELUDE

Club became the headquarters, the Club Room, of the Men's Musical Club, while the Billiard Room on the lowest floor was also available for rehearsals and meetings, after the tables were removed a year or so later by the Adanac Club.

The Music and Arts Building soon became a centre of real musical activity, and at one period the Recital Hall was taken up weekly during the winter as follows:

<i>Monday,</i>	United Scottish Choir.
<i>Tuesday,</i>	Winnipeg Oratorio Society.
<i>Wednesday,</i>	Male Voice Choir.
<i>Thursday,</i>	Amateur Orchestra.
<i>Friday,</i>	Dance.
<i>Saturday,</i>	Men's Musical Club Recital.

Developments in later years modified this schedule, but the building remained the musical centre of Winnipeg, and from it radiated much, if not most, of the citizens' increased musical life. The official opening of the renamed building took the form of an Inaugural Reception on Saturday, September 29th, 1917, and it is estimated that over two thousand people passed through it that evening. Brief programmes of music were given alternately in the Recital Hall and in the Club Room (or as it was called at first the Lecture Hall) and the names of those who took part included Watkin Mills, R. Habbeshaw, John Waterhouse, Arnold Dann, F. H. Hughes, Josef Shadwick, Roy Wydeman, Leonard Heaton, James Isherwood, W. Davidson Thomson, Cyril Hogg, Norman Douglas, W. George Rutherford, and the Male Voice Choir with George Price conducting, the accompanists being F. Hotchkiss Osborn, Burton L. Kurth, and Stanley Osborne. The story of the Music and Arts Building, however, rather anticipates.

## CHAPTER III

### OVERTURE

MEMBERSHIP — RECITAL SCHEDULE — DEVELOPMENT OF MALE  
VOICE CHOIR — MUSICAL CLUBS' ORCHESTRA — PUBLIC  
CONCERTS — BIRTH OF THE MUSICAL COMPETITION FESTIVAL —  
BOARD OF TRADE AND MUSIC — MUSIC CREDITS IN SCHOOLS.

At the close of the first season (1915-1916) the membership was one hundred and twenty (See Appendix A) of which in 1934, twenty-one were still members. Professional men, lawyers, chartered accountants, ministers, teachers, university professors, doctors, railwaymen, manufacturers, retail and wholesale dealers, grain men, newspaper men, and others, all contributed to the membership, of which 30% were professional musicians. To the happy co-operation of the professional with the amateur and the business man much, if not most, of the Club's vitality is due. At the Annual Meeting of the members (it took two full evenings to get through the business) formal installation of the Male Voice Choir as a section of the Club was duly ratified, and the hope was expressed that in the following winter "other sections might be formed . . . with special reference to a String Orchestra." From that day onwards the Club never lost sight of the orchestral problem, and much thought was given, and many plans tried out, towards its solution.

The season of 1916-1917 was a full one of weekly recitals, and as a matter of interest, the complete schedule as drafted for that season is given here. The schedule was not rigidly adhered to,

## OVERTURE

circumstances necessitating an occasional modification, but a full list of recitals was carried out.

<i>October</i>	2—British Composers.
<i>October</i>	9—Grand Opera.
<i>October</i>	16—Mendelssohn.
<i>October</i>	23—Debate.
<i>October</i>	30—Ladies' Night, Chamber Music.
<i>November</i>	6—Oratorio.
<i>November</i>	13—Lecture.
<i>November</i>	20—French Composers.
<i>November</i>	27—Ladies' Night, Verdi.
<i>December</i>	4—Russian Composers.
<i>December</i>	11—Grieg.
<i>December</i>	18—Ladies' Night, Male Voice Choir.
<i>January</i>	1—New Year Music.
<i>January</i>	8—Italian Composers.
<i>January</i>	15—Debate.
<i>January</i>	22—Chamber Music.
<i>January</i>	29—Ladies' Night, Sullivan.
<i>February</i>	5—Tschaikowsky.
<i>February</i>	12—Ballads.
<i>February</i>	19—Gounod.
<i>February</i>	26—Ladies' Night, British Composers.
<i>March</i>	5—Lecture.
<i>March</i>	12—Bach, Beethoven, Brahms.
<i>March</i>	19—Elgar.
<i>March</i>	26—Ladies' Night, Chamber Music.
<i>April</i>	2—Scandinavian Composers.
<i>April</i>	9—Handel, Haydn.
<i>April</i>	16—Grand Opera.
<i>April</i>	23—Ladies' Night, Male Voice Choir.
<i>April</i>	30—Annual General Meeting.

There is no need to comment on the obvious lack of discriminating balance in the allocations. It is interesting to note the Programme

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Committee's analysis of the season's programme material. Here it is: Vocal 49%, Piano 28%, String 17%, Choral 4%, Orchestral 2%. The Male Voice Choir appeared twice at these recitals, on Monday, December 18th, and on Saturday, April 28th. During the season it had also sung to the Rotary Club (February 21st), and had appeared twice at the Masonic Temple (February 23rd—Connaught Chapter, and April 3rd—Assiniboine Chapter). It had also augmented the Handel Choir (Conductor, Watkin Mills) in a performance of "The Messiah" on Good Friday.

At the Club Recital on December 18th the Choir presented Stanford's "Song of the Sea," with F. H. Hughes in the solo part. This was not the première of this work in Winnipeg, as that had been given by the Choir at its first public appearance outside of the Club Recitals at a concert in the Fort Garry Hotel on Thursday, November 23rd, 1916, in aid of the funds of the Navy League. This was the first time that the Club had accepted the responsibility for contributions to a programme outside of the Club Recitals. Part of that programme was given by members of the Women's Musical Club, and this concert marked the first instance of that friendly co-operation with each other, that continues to characterize the relations of the two Clubs. But at the Club Recital on April 28th the Choir gave the first performance in Winnipeg of Brahms' "Alto Rhapsody" with Orchestra, the solo part being taken by Madame McAdam Murray.

Another première in Winnipeg was given at a Club Recital that season when, on October 30th, 1916, Percy Grainger's "Molly on the Shore," arranged as a String Quartet, was played by four of the members.

During the season, efforts to form an Amateur String Orchestra did not succeed owing to so many players being overseas. A piano section was successfully formed, however, which for the next few years provided much material for the Club Recitals.

On Tuesday, May 8th, 1917, in Young Church, the Club signaled its first public appearance in management, by promoting a concert in aid of the Fund for Canadian Prisoners of War in

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Germany. The entire programme was given by members of the Club, including Watkin Mills, W. Davidson Thomson, F. H. Hughes, James Isherwood, Robert Habbeshaw, Roy W. Wydeman, John Waterhouse, A. L. Scott, Geo. H. Williams, W. Maurice Miles, Arnold Dann and the Male Voice Choir with George Price conducting, the accompanists being F. Hotchkiss Osborn and Stanley Osborne. Again we quote the Free Press on the work of the Choir:

"Success which compelled immediate admiration, the respective sections of the choir revealing commendable refinement of tone, fidelity of intonation, transparency of enunciation, and expressive delivery."

In October 1917 Joe Tees moved to Calgary for business reasons, and so in less than two years from its inception, the Club lost the enthusiastic, encouraging, personality of the man to whom it owed its advent.

During the following two years (1917-18, and 1918-19) of what has been referred to as its first historical period, the Club, while faithfully carrying out its schedule of weekly recitals, gradually began to feel the urge towards broader activity although these two years were drawing to a close before the first actual steps were taken.

It was in the first of these winters that the Club made the first of its efforts in the orchestral field. So many musicians were overseas that it was found impossible to carry on among members of the Club, and, as a result of conversations with members of the Women's Musical Club in the spring of 1918, a small combined orchestra was formed. John Waterhouse was the first conductor and R. W. Huxtable, Secretary, but when Mr. Waterhouse had to withdraw later for reasons of poor health, Alec. Scott took up the baton. It was not until the spring of 1919, however, that the orchestra was able to make its initial appearance, which it did on January 25th, 1919, at the Regular Weekly Recital of the Men's Musical Club. The Women's Musical Club enjoyed a similar privilege a few weeks later on March 31st. The orchestra consisted of thirty-three players,

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thirteen ladies and twenty gentlemen, seven being members of the Winnipeg Musicians' Association. The expenses were borne equally by the two Clubs. The programmes included:

The Jewels of the Madonna, Intermezzo No. 1 and 2	<i>Wolf-Ferrari</i>
Colonial Song . . . . .	<i>Gramger</i>
Coronation March . . . . .	<i>Meyerbeer</i>
Scenes Pittoresques . . . . .	<i>Massenet</i>
Pomp and Circumstance . . . . .	<i>Elgar</i>
In the Garden . . . . .	<i>Goldmark</i>
Morris Dance . . . . .	<i>Horner</i>
Festival March . . . . .	<i>Mendelssohn</i>
Largo from New World Symphony . . . . .	<i>Dvorak</i>
Bridal Song, Intermezzo . . . . .	<i>Goldmark</i>
Serenade, Scherzo . . . . .	<i>Goldmark</i>
Fifth Symphony, 2nd movement . . . . .	<i>Tschaikowsky</i>
L'automne et l'hiver (The Seasons) . . . . .	<i>Glazounov</i>

the first two being performed in Winnipeg for the first time.

It was, of course, no pretence at a Symphony Orchestra, but in those barren days it gave a great deal of real pleasure to starved souls. Both concerts were under joint auspices, each Club taking the responsibility of management in turn, and they were both given in the Banqueting Hall of the Royal Alexandra Hotel which was well filled. Alec. Scott, who now resides in Victoria, B.C., always has been a string enthusiast. A good violinist himself, he had had considerable experience as a player and also conductor, and the time was to come when he would step into the breach as a choral conductor. He also plays a jolly good game of golf. His departure to the Coast for reasons of health lost to Winnipeg a rare spirit.

On February 7th, 1918, the Club accepted the responsibility of promoting its second public concert, this time on behalf of the Navy League. It was held in St. Stephen's Church at the corner of Portage Avenue and Spence Street (now Elim Chapel) and again the Male Voice Choir enhanced its growing reputation. At the Club Recital on April 20, 1918, the Choir gave the first performance in Winnipeg



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of C. Harford Lloyd's "Longbeard's Saga." It had appeared at several other minor concerts throughout the winter and now numbered 46 voices of whom Walter Lawson is the only one who is still a singing member, although A. G. Duncan, is now the active Librarian.

The Secretary, although a Scotsman and a chartered accountant, seems to have had the idea that minutes were usually dull and dry affairs and needed enlivening. At an early rehearsal the Chairman gave a brief historical explanation of the story of the "Longbeard's Saga," which is taken from Kingsley's *Hypatia*, and the Secretary incorporated this in the minutes in paraphrased form. The minutes state that the Chairman said the Longbeards were really the precursors of the Lombards of whom

"vestigial records remain in the well-known street of the Lombards, the centre of the financial activity in London, and in their great trading symbol of the three moons. This symbol, having since degenerated into the sign of the three golden balls, appeared to be quite familiar to the speaker! In the Longbeard's Saga the Winella are about to be attacked by the Wendels (Vandals). Odin (God of War) favours the latter, while Freya (his alleged wife) "fans" for the former. Having vowed that the first of the warring tribes to give him "daybreak greetings" should be conquerors in the coming conflict, Odin planned to favour his friends by falling asleep with his face turned in the direction from which he expected them to appear. Freya, however, (being the wife!) naturally seeks to circumvent his plans, and during the night reverses her lord's couch so that Odin awoke to find the Winella before him, and the Winella score the first goal. Apparently said goal had been won on a foul, for the men of the tribe were unrepresented on this occasion. The women, however, had stepped into the breach(es) and by undoing their coiffures and, bringing their hair round the face in the fashion of beards, succeeded in hoodwinking the old son of a gun. Freya instantly claimed the promise of victory for her Amazons who had been hailed as Longbeards by the astigmatical old god."

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Up until the end of season 1917-1918, rehearsals of the choir had been held on Thursday evening in each week, but in September 1918 this was changed to Wednesday which is still the rehearsal night. The reason was that Thursday was not suitable for the accompanist, Stanley Osborne, and, instead of getting another accompanist, they changed the night! Stanley had filled the position since the inception of the choir with the exception of a period in the spring of 1916, and the choir passed up the chance to get rid of him then, as he has stuck to the stool through storm and shine year after year, except when Mrs. H. W. Porter deputised for him a few weeks in the spring of 1920. The value of Stan's loyalty can hardly be overestimated, and his experience as a choir conductor, as well as accompanist, enabled him to carry the choir through certain periods of stress through which they were fated to pass. In every emergency Stan came to the rescue and was immediately self-effacing when the gap was bridged.

During the summer of 1918 the members of the Club sponsored organ recitals in Westminster Church by Dr. H. A. Fricker, conductor of the Mendelssohn Choir, Toronto, (May 28th) and by Dr. George Dyson, of Winchester School (June 6th). Both are now Honorary Members of the Club and the associations thus formed were subsequently of enormous value to the Club and to Winnipeg.

On June 17th, 1918, a step was taken which had more far-reaching effects than were dreamed of at the time, and again George Price was the moving spirit. On that date the executive appointed a sub-committee to investigate and report on a plan to inaugurate a Musical Competition Festival in Winnipeg. George, naturally, had had much experience of such Festivals in his old county, Yorkshire, and as a member of the York Male Choir had competed at a Festival in Paris. He was the only member of the executive who had any practical knowledge of the operation of a Festival, but he was able to communicate his ideas so as to catch the enthusiasm of some, if not all, of his associates.

On July 8th the report of the sub-committee was adopted, and the Manitoba Musical Competition Festival was launched. George

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Price and the Secretary were instructed "to select the Test Pieces and to draft the By-laws and Regulations and to submit the latter to the Council at a later date." This was a task of some responsibility. The Regulations were not so difficult, as George had many programmes and other data of Old Country Festivals, and, after some research, a set of Rules was drafted which was finally adopted by the Executive. It says much for the soundness of his judgment that these Regulations with additions, but very few modifications, are still in 1934 the basis of the Festival structure. The selection of Test Pieces was, of course, not a matter for one or even two men, and subsequently a fully equipped Selection Committee was appointed to do this work.

In the matter of the appointment of adjudicators, steps were taken to co-operate with a similar Festival which had been functioning in Alberta for some years before the war. This was the genesis of that comprehensive plan of co-operation among Canadian Musical Competition Festivals which has exerted such a profound influence on the whole Festival Movement in Canada. The Festival was held in May 1919, and forms part of the second period of the Club's history.

The following season, 1918-1919, was hardly in full swing before the influenza epidemic, which was then sweeping the world, became so serious in Winnipeg that the health authorities placed a ban on meetings of any kind where even a few could be gathered, and rehearsals, as well as the regular weekly recitals, had to be suspended. The embargo lasted for six weeks and the members did not meet in any general capacity between October 12th and December 2nd. The epidemic did not take toll of the membership during the period in which the prohibition of meetings was effective, but, a few days after the ban was lifted, the Club lost one of its most gifted pianists in the person of Cyril Ralphur Hogg, while in the following week J. T. Hick, the violoncellist, also fell a victim to the scourge. The interregnum, however, afforded the time to perfect the arrangements for the coming Competition Festival, of which full advantage was taken, and it is more than probable that the smoothness which has

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consistently characterized the operations of all the subsequent Festivals, was due to the study and forethought which were given to the general structure during these weeks.

It was in this winter that the Bureau of Music of the Board of Trade was established, a novel venture by a commercial body into the realm of cultural community life. The Board of Trade had moved its headquarters a year or two previously to a set of buildings surrounding the old Canadian Northern Railway Terminal. They had rechristened these buildings the Industrial Bureau and had reconstructed, rearranged, and redecorated the old train shed so that it might be used for concerts. It was thereafter known as the Board of Trade Auditorium. The honour of giving the initial concert had been accorded to the Oratorio Society in the spring of 1918 (April 8, 9, 10), the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra being brought to the city for the occasion. The success attending this opening had encouraged the Board of Trade to endeavour to expand the use of the building for general concert purposes and the creation of the Bureau of Music was the first step.

Being alive to the possibilities underlying the future activities of the Bureau backed by the leading business men of the city, the executive of the Club listened readily to a suggestion that the Club should co-operate, and in January 1919 they made formal application for membership in the Board of Trade. The constitution of the Board of Trade, however, did not provide for an organization like the Club being a member, and the application was therefore negatived. The co-operation between the Club and the Bureau functioned successfully nevertheless for many years with considerable advantage to the development of music in the city. Not a little of the harmonious relations was probably due to the fact that during these years most, and at times, all of the members of the Bureau were members of the Club.

In pursuance of their plans the new Bureau sponsored the Spring Festival in April 1919 with the assistance and co-operation of the Oratorio Society. The Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra provided the backbone of the programmes, the Oratorio Society performing

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Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise," and the soloists including Anna Fitzui, Emma Noe, Harriett McConnell, Morgan Kingston, Allan McQuahe, Albert Lindquist, Finlay Campbell, and Percy Grainger. The capital outlay was just over \$11,000.00, and the receipts were just about \$100.00 in excess of the expenses. Miss Rachel Kinsolving was brought from Chicago to manage the concerts, and her wide experience in this field was of great advantage. The Male Voice Choir was invited to appear at these concerts, but, after going into the matter carefully, asked to be excused. The main difficulty lay in the acoustical problem, as the music which it had under preparation was not entirely suitable for effective presentation in a building unequipped as the Board of Trade Auditorium was at that time. The Choir made an actual test of the acoustics, and, although the test was not conclusive on account of the Hall being empty, the Conductor and the Choir Executive considered it unwise to take a chance of weakening the Festival by appearing. As a result of suggestions made by the Club Executive, however, acoustical tests were made by Professor Frank Allen and Dr. Swale Vincent, and a movable soundboard was provided at a later date which enabled the choir for several years to achieve there some of its greatest successes.

It was in this spring of 1919 that the Club joined with a committee of the city music teachers and other musical bodies in urging on the educational authorities the importance of school credits in music. The idea was to have music recognized as an optional subject in the High Schools, although the pupil was being instructed by a fully qualified teacher not on the school staff. It took time to work out the plan of operations with the powers that be, but the present system of music credits is due to the lead which the music teachers gave at that time.

The close of the 1918-1919 season marked the entry of the Club into that wider sphere in which it was to function in the next fifteen years. The domestic and internal life has continued without interruption, the regular recitals being still the common ground on which the great majority of the members meet. Ladies' Nights, which so far had been confined to one recital per month, were later extended

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to two recitals each month. Naturally the audiences at these recitals, although largely non-professional, were more discriminating than those composing the general audiences at public concerts. They always showed themselves to be so warmly appreciative of the music provided as to strike a responsive chord in the minds and hearts of the performers, and the best of Winnipeg's musicians seemed to derive as much pleasure in appearing before these audiences as was received by those who listened. No fees were ever paid for appearing at these recitals, but all performers, professional and amateur alike, entered whole-heartedly into making that contribution which the Club, through these recitals, made, towards the advancement of music in the community. The audiences were in a way restricted — the capacity of the Recital Hall being three hundred — but in 1934 they had been going on for nineteen years with the many changes in the personnel of the listeners that time enevitably brings, and the repercussions through wide sections of the citizens have exerted important influences on the city's musical life.





WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHOIR—HUGH ROSS CONDUCTOR—1922



WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHOIR GEORGE PRICE, CONDUCTOR—1919



## CHAPTER IV

### SYMPHONIE PUBLIQUE

#### *First Movement*

#### FIRST MALE VOICE CHOIR CONCERT — FIRST MUSICAL COMPETITION FESTIVAL.

The emergence of the Club into the public view took place on April 3rd, 1919. Attention has been drawn to the breadth of outline in the constitutional objects of the Club. The third clause therein provided for the promotion of "visits to the City of Winnipeg by distinguished artists." During the first three years of its existence this feature had been allowed to lie dormant. It had never been seriously before the minds of the members, probably because of the influence of the war and the unspoken sentiment that, under these circumstances, the times were inopportune.

The reception which had been accorded to the Male Voice Choir wherever it had appeared, and more especially at the two public concerts promoted by the Club for patriotic purposes in 1917 and 1918, had been so spontaneous in its encouragement that the Choir and its conductor yielded to many suggestions that it should come out into the open and appear on the concert platform in a programme, the most of which would be given by it. In carrying out this idea the Choir decided that it could best impress its ideals on the audiences, and strengthen its general influence, by engaging some distinguished soloist. Ultimately the choice settled on the late Reed Miller who, it was subsequently learned, was the tenor soloist at Fifth Avenue Episcopal Church, New York, of which T. Tertius Noble, who was to adjudicate later at the Competition Festivals, was

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organist. This first Concert was given in Young Church on Thursday, April 3rd, 1919, and the choir made a deep impression. The following are the press comments:

It would be hard indeed to find a male choir which could equal their splendid singing — Apparently they are capable of handling any type of choral music . . . great precision of attack and release . . . enunciation is remarkably clear . . . sounded exactly like a beautifully-toned organ, rich and resonant.

—(*Free Press*)

Precision of attack, rhythmical unanimity and good enunciation . . . delicacy of expression and feeling . . . what must be considered a notable concert.

—(*Tribune*)

These comments on the singing seem almost fulsome in their flattering references, but even making due allowance for local enthusiasm, it was apparent that a new note in choral interpretation and technique had been struck. George Price had achieved the triumph of his career, and it is pathetic to realize that death a few months later was to bring to a close his conductorship of the Choir to which he had given so much. After the concert he was approached "to do something for the ladies chorally as he had done for the men" but he was not able to respond.

Norman Douglas, than whom there are few, if any, more enthusiastic choralists, and who at that time was in charge of the music at Knox Church, was so influenced by the results of George Price's work with the Male Voice Choir, that he induced the church authorities to increase the church choir to forty voices from the double quartet then functioning and to appoint George Price choir-master. George did some considerable voice testing and selecting that summer and by September he had built up the new choir to the required strength. Alas, he was fated to be with them for only a few weeks, but the Knox Choir of to-day is the direct outcome of the effect of the first Male Voice Concert.

Since that day the Choir has given many public concerts assisted by many distinguished artists. It has had many changes in personnel

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and several, sometimes sudden, changes in conductorship, but through them all it has ever endeavoured to set the pace in choralism in Winnipeg. There have been many fine choral performances in the city during these years which have afforded clear evidence of a marked increase in the number of conductors and singers of choral music of a relatively high standard of performance. The value of a leader, someone to show the way in this, as in other forms of cultural development, is incalculable, and, while others may in time challenge its leadership, to the Male Voice Choir must be given full credit for the great work they have done for choral music in Winnipeg.

The first Manitoba Musical Competition Festival was held in Winnipeg on May 13th, 14th, and 15th, 1919. It was an experiment; public reaction either from competitors or listeners in such a cosmopolitan city as Winnipeg was an unknown quantity. It is true that some had been alive to the significance of the new development. On November 16th, 1918, the Free Press wrote:

"Planned in war times, but evidently to be consummated in the coming days of peace, the Manitoba Musical Competition Festival is a remarkable tribute to the high faith and hearty resolve of that group of men in Winnipeg, which, more than any other agency perhaps, has assisted, during the last two years, to raise the local standards of music, and secure for it a deeper and at the same time a more popular appreciation."

Every care had been taken to make the general structure and especially the various sessions as attractive to the audience as possible. The adjudicators were distinguished musicians, both of whom had had important experience of English Festivals, Dr. H. A. Fricker, of Toronto, and formerly of Leeds, England, and T. Tertius Noble, of New York, formerly of The Minster, York, England. Publicity was handicapped by the lack of public knowledge of what such a Festival was like. An invitation to listen to twenty tenors singing "I'll sing thee songs of Araby" would not likely appear attractive to the average individual. To anyone with experience of a Festival, the fascination is intense, and the executive believed that, once the

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public started coming, they would feel the attraction and continue to come. But how could they be induced to come in the first instance? There was no apparent answer.

It was difficult to plan a time schedule which at the first Festival could be adhered to. One was at the mercy of the adjudicators for one thing, because it was impossible to estimate the time necessary for them to write their notes on each competitor, or the length of their spoken adjudications. The result was that the evening sessions at least were longer than expected. In fact, on the last evening the final adjudication closed at ten minutes after one o'clock in the morning, but the audience, relatively small though it was (about five hundred), stayed with it right to the end to a man (and woman), even although at midnight there commenced Winnipeg's famous seven weeks' general strike, and many of the audience faced a walk home, there being no street cars running. The strike also caused the postponement of a final exhibition concert until October 9th, instead of being held as an immediate and fitting close to the Festival as was planned.

It is noteworthy that the general scheme of the daily programme adopted that year has stood the test of years:

*Forenoons* —Preliminaries in children's classes.

*Afternoons*—Finals and main children's classes.

*Twilights* —Preliminaries in adult classes.

*Evenings* —Finals and main adult classes.

This again emphasises the soundness in judgment shown by these Festival pioneers. The venue of the main events has moved between Central Church, the Board of Trade Auditorium, the Playhouse Theatre and the new Civic Auditorium. Various smaller halls in the city have been used for preliminary competitions.

What the destiny of the Festival would eventually turn out to be was shrouded in uncertainty. The Club believed it had elements of strength that in time would wield an influence for better music-making in the community and were not discouraged by the inadequate financial returns of the first two Festivals. How their faith was justified history was to tell.

## CHAPTER V

### INTERLUDE ~ GRAVE

SATURDAY POPS — DEATH OF GEORGE PRICE — ARRIVAL OF CYRIL MUSGROVE — SECOND COMPETITION FESTIVAL — CONCERT HALL PROBLEM — VISITING ARTISTS — THIRD FESTIVAL — DEATH OF CYRIL MUSGROVE.

In the season of 1919-1920 the Bureau of Music of the Board of Trade organized a series of Saturday evening popular concerts in pursuance of its policy of encouraging the use of the Board of Trade Auditorium for public gatherings. Three of these concerts were under the combined sponsorship of the Bureau and the Men's Musical Club, the latter providing the programmes, and the former the business supervision, the financial risk being assumed jointly. The admission charge was the modest one of 25c and no fees were paid to any of the performers. The Male Voice Choir appeared at two of the concerts, but, despite the position which the choir had made for itself in the public mind, the audiences were not so large as might have been expected, and the loss to the Club on the three concerts was slightly over \$100.00. The Bureau continued this series of popular concerts for a few years, and, when the Club repeated the joint experiment two years later, the financial result was slightly over \$100.00 on the other side of the account.

The Choir, a month prior to the first of these concerts, had lost its gifted conductor, George Price, who passed away on November 19th, 1919, after less than a week's illness. He had taken the usual

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rehearsal the week before, and the first intimation the members had of any danger was the news at rehearsal that he had died less than three hours previously. He had been their conductor for a little less than four years, but in that time he had made the choir a living force in the community.

Alec. Scott, who had led the orchestra so successfully the previous season, was induced to take up the baton in the emergency, although disclaiming any knowledge of choral technique. The conductor and the choir carried on so convincingly that at the two spring concerts in Young Church on March 3rd and 4th all the seats were sold out three days' before the first concert, and the public reaction was a further consolidation of the choir in public estimation. Alec. Scott departed for the Coast immediately after the concerts, and for the remainder of the season Bartley Brown, the Chairman, carried on the duties of conductor.

The status of the choir and the feelings of the members were now such as called for a forward policy with a view to progressive development, and to this end it was decided to pay an annual salary to the conductor. George Price's death had hit the men hard, and at the time it looked like a calamity, but, in the light of subsequent history, it forced a course of action which had important effects, not only on the choir itself, but on the musical growth of Winnipeg. In the fourteen years that have followed, the choir has been under the leadership of a few brilliant young English musicians who, besides carrying on their choir duties, held the position of organist and choirmaster at Holy Trinity Anglican Church. Their influence on the choir's musicianship cannot be gainsaid; the members are not only better choristers, but their horizon has been greatly widened.

These musicians have also made their impress on all branches of their art with which they have come in contact. In the field of the Symphony Orchestra, the major choral and orchestral works, chamber music, opera, and teaching and coaching, they have diffused a wealth of ideas and spirit. In church choir music, their participation in the Festival each year, as conductor of Holy Trinity Church Choir, has been a stimulus to all church choirs, and while the singing

## INTERLUDE—GRAVE

of other church choirs has been equally brilliant, the urge to high performance has been continuously evident.

The first of these English conductors was Cyril F. Musgrove who arrived in Winnipeg in August, 1920. He had come from Scarborough on the Yorkshire coast, and had, prior to that, been assistant organist at York Minster to both T. Tertius Noble and Dr. E. C. (now Sir Edward) Bairstow. It was through the good offices of Mr. Noble that he came to Winnipeg. It was also a strange coincidence that he had been organist at St. Belfrey's, York, and that George Price had been his leading bass.

Meanwhile, the second Manitoba Musical Competition Festival had come and gone. It was held in March instead of in May as in the previous year. It had been represented to the executive that the later date coincided with important field work in the rural districts, and that this fact deterred rural church choirs from entering. The change, however, did not have the desired effect of increasing such entries, and, as dates in March conflicted with the general concert season, the Festival in the following year was held after Easter, and it has maintained that position ever since.

It was in this season (1919-1920) that the problem of the public concert hall first seriously engaged the attention of the members of the Club, and for the next nine years its officials were more or less actively occupied in furthering plans for its erection, despite a widespread conflict of ideas as to site, plans, capacity, equipment, and cost, all of which had to be merged in one common agreement as to what would best suit the needs of the majority of the community interests.

The financial aspect loomed seriously and to many it seemed hopeless to expect that the money would be forthcoming under the conditions that existed. The more optimistic inclined to the opinion that the funds might be available if a building could be planned which would strike the right note. There were times when these complexities developed such divergencies of views that it seemed impossible to devise a plan which would meet with sufficient general approval to justify going on with it, but through it all the Club

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endeavoured to accommodate its aspirations to meet all obstacles avoiding undue pressure of its own ideas, and affording every opportunity for investigation into what at times were irritating side issues. To these complexities can be attributed the recurring exasperating delays through these years, and it seemed as though the only chance of securing a hall lay in some wealthy citizen providing the funds and arbitrarily deciding on the plans himself.

It was not a new problem, more than one scheme having been mooted in years gone by by other groups of citizens, but the advent of the war had forced these into the discard. What brought the question acutely before the members of the Club were the growing requirements of music in the city, and chiefly the development of the Male Voice Choir and the Musical Competition Festival, in both of which the members of the Club were directly concerned. While every credit was being accorded to the enterprise and public spirit of the Board of Trade in their efforts to adapt its Auditorium as a building suitable for concerts and other public gatherings, such a building could not be regarded at the best as more than a temporary expedient even for those events that could be housed in it. Meanwhile many organizations continued to use the churches for their functions, and it is to the great credit of the church authorities that for so many years they had so generously come to the rescue in the interests of music. Many people also, rightly or wrongly, regarded the Board of Trade Auditorium with misgiving as a fire risk; the hissing and knocking of steam radiators inside, and the noise of shunting locomotives outside the building, intervened at many an inopportune moment; and the seating accommodation was not so comfortable as one would like. Nevertheless some great concerts were held there with large audiences before the civic authorities finally decided that the building was not suitable for large gatherings and ordered it closed.

This was the situation facing members of the Club when they took the first step in the direction of a solution of the public hall problem by having tentative plans prepared for a hall to be erected adjoining the rear of the Music and Arts Building. Even at the







WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHOIR AT NEW YORK, 1923



WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHOIR AT CHICAGO, 1922

## INTERLUDE—GRAVE

time this was regarded as an expedient only justified by the dire necessity of keeping costs down to the lowest possible amount, and only the demand for a concert hall warranted its consideration. However, before another step could be taken, the Deputy Minister of Public Works, S. C. Oxtou, who had visions of an important cross thoroughfare to the Parliament Buildings, persuaded the members to consider a site thereon and to have F. W. Simon, the architect of the Parliament Buildings, submit plans. When these were drafted it was found that they would involve an outlay of two million dollars, and this ruled them out of court.

This was only the first of a series of delays that met the members of the Club as they maintained their efforts to secure a suitable concert hall. After two years of waiting for some action on this idea of a Mall, the members concluded that it would not be practicable in the near future, while the call for a Concert Hall was urgent. The original idea was, therefore, reverted to. Just as further definite action was about to be taken, the Club was invited to join forces with a Committee of the Board of Trade which had been appointed to go into the matter. While this seemed to threaten another delay, the importance of widening the interest in a Public Hall could not be ignored, and the Club, as it consistently did at every step, gladly adopted the suggestion, and conferences with this Committee were held, which extended over several months.

During these two years other interesting developments had taken place. Cyril Musgrove had carried the Male Voice Choir a step further on its road to excellence, the Choir giving two main concerts besides making other appearances under his baton. At the first of these, in Young Church on December 9th, 1920, the soloist was Gervase Elwes, who was to lose his life so tragically a few weeks later, and at the second in Knox Church on March 9th, 1921, Rudolph Ganz was the soloist. This was the only concert which was ever given in Knox Church by any of the Club's activities. The press notices confirmed the enhanced position of the Choir, and Musgrove's leadership was lauded. The singing of Gervase Elwes was significant for his exposition of the vocal beauty

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of the King's English, only comparable in later years in this respect to the singing of John Coates, Campbell McInnes, the English Singers, and John Goss and his London Singers.

Under the auspices of the Club, Cyril Scott played in Young Church on January 18th, 1921, and Sophie Braslau sang in the Board of Trade Auditorium on February 10th in the same year, the Choir also appearing at the latter concert. These concerts were given in pursuance of the Club's settled policy of securing contributions to the musical life of the community when it felt some deficiency existed. It has always refrained from sponsoring any activity when it believed that such was being adequately supplied by other agency or organization. The following year on January 25th, 1922, Joseph Hyslop was presented in the Board of Trade Auditorium and on January 18th, 1923, Alfred Cortot appeared there under the auspices of the Club. This marked the close of the Club's activity in this direction outside of the Male Voice Choir requirements. From that time onwards the Club has felt that Winnipeg was receiving at least as many, visiting artists as it could absorb, if not more.

The third Musical Competition Festival was held in April 1921 and while it showed an increase in entries over those of the two previous Festivals and a higher general standard of performance, it also marked a noticeable expansion in public interest, the financial returns being sufficient to wipe out the deficits of the first two Festivals, and thereby justifying the Club's courageous persistence.

At all these Festivals the light and shade are usually furnished by the adjudicators, to whose constructive, kindly, and at times, humorous, pronouncements from the platform much of the fascination of the Festival is due. Toward the competitor, especially the sensitive aspirant, their attitude has been considerate and sympathetic, and such humour as they introduce has always a direct bearing on the point to be elucidated, and is never at the expense of the competitor. The audiences too have always shown a similar encouraging sympathy for the competitor. On rare occasions a perfectly innocent remark by an adjudicator has, through some local colour of which he and most of the audience were totally

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ignorant, been capable of some application entirely different from that intended, and a rough spot has subsequently to be quietly smoothed out. This is unavoidable where the English tongue is spoken; even lawyers, with all their whereases, fail at times to protect their dictums from doubtful interpretations.

At times, however, the humorous interlude is unconsciously supplied by the competitors themselves, and with all the kindliness possible in their hearts for the competitor, the situation created becomes too much for the sense of humour of the audience. At this Festival such a contretemps occurred in the class for Duets — Tenor and Baritone, or Bass. There were three pairs of competitors and the Test Piece was "Go, Baffled Coward," from Handel's "Samson." It is not an ideal test for duettists, the first part being more of a dialogue between Samson and Harapha than a duet.

The first two competitors were intriguing. The tenor was about a head taller than the bass, and, as he ordered him to go, he dramatically looked down at him over his glasses. He was in deadly earnest but many in the audience did not take it quite so seriously and had real difficulty in retaining their composure. The atmosphere, therefore, was not so dramatic as Handel's music called for when the second pair made their appearance. Although there were other scores available, they came on with only one copy between them as they had probably rehearsed from the single copy. At the close of Samson's rather long opening declamation, Harapha coolly took the score from his confrere and proceeded to reply, and then later Samson retaliated in kind. All this was done quite seriously, but it was evident that the audience were having difficulty in maintaining their admirable restraint. The climax was reached when Harapha, after having been dramatically enjoined to "Go, Baffled Coward" suddenly missed his cue, lost his lead, and with one look of disgust at Samson, turned on his heel, and incontinently "went" — off the platform. Samson, realizing what had happened, slowly followed him. This was too much for the gravity of the audience and they let themselves go in good-natured laughter and smiles. The third pair, who subsequently got the highest marks, came on apparently

## CRESCE~~N~~DO

determined to have no accidents. They seemed metaphorically to have their teeth clenched, and all went well. To the second pair, however, went the glory in the manner in which they took their discomfiture. Their bearing was admirable, and breathed the essence of the real spirit of the Festival.

In August of that year (1921), less than one year after his arrival in Winnipeg, the Male Voice Choir lost its conductor, Cyril Musgrove, who was drowned while bathing at Keewatin. During his brief sojourn he had made many friends, and the members of the choir were heart and soul with him. Besides adding to the musical status of the Choir, he had endeared himself to his Church Choir, and in these few months had found time to conduct a week's performance of "The Gondoliers" produced by the Orpheus Club, a performance which probably represented the most brilliant work of this kind ever given by amateurs in the city. He had been married just a year and a day previously, and was buried in Elmwood Cemetery in the grave adjoining his predecessor, George Price. Finis had been written to another chapter.

## CHAPTER VI

### SYMPHONIE PUBLIQUE

#### *Second Movement*

ARRIVAL OF HUGH ROSS — MALE VOICE CHOIR AT ALLEN THEATRE  
— FIRST MALE VOICE CHOIR TOUR.

It was at this point that the Choir in their difficulty turned to Dr. George Dyson, with whom the Club had established friendly contact when he visited Winnipeg in 1918. The result of his influence, combined with that of Sir Hugh Allen, of the Royal College of Music, was the appointment of Hugh C. M. Ross to be conductor of the Male Voice Choir, organist at Holy Trinity Church, and head of the music faculty of Wesley College. He did not remain long with Wesley College, as he soon found other more interesting avenues of activity, but he was with the Choir and Church for six years. He arrived in Winnipeg in the early hours of Sunday, October 16th, 1921, his train being four hours late, and four members of the Club mooned around the C.P.R. Depot killing part of the time in an all night lunch counter. None of them, of course, had met him before, but he was easily spotted as, in characteristic fashion, he came down the stairs, two and three steps at a time, carrying a viola case. He was promptly carried off to a well-known place of refreshment known colloquially as the "Bucket of Blood" and this was Hugh's introduction to life in Winnipeg.

Next day the Choir commenced a week's engagement (afternoon and evening) at the Allen Theatre (now Metropolitan) with

## CRESCENDO

Norman Douglas conducting, and at some of the "turns" Hugh Ross was among the choristers singing second bass! It is of interest to know that for that week the Choir received \$1200.00 or \$100.00 for each appearance. The members became quite adept as quick change artists. So well had Norman Douglas handled the situation in the interim that Hugh was able to conduct a fairly full programme by the Choir at one of the popular concerts in the Board of Trade Auditorium on November 28th, 1921.

The experience of the Choir under his leadership during the first four months was one of the most trying through which the members ever came. His energy was tireless and the members had to work as they had never worked before. His mind functioned at lightning speed, and it demanded concentration to try to keep pace with him. His sense of absolute pitch made him sensitive to the slightest variation and the time he spent endeavouring to overcome this failing, more or less common to all choirs, seemed out of proportion. Some of the rehearsals were nearly torture, but his musicianship and his gifts were so remarkable in the eyes and to the ears of the singers that they stayed with him. The effect of these weeks was never lost; the men came closer to Hugh's ideals, and he in turn moderated his speed nearer to their limitations. But his dynamic personality was always present, and at times by sheer weight carried the choir over some rough spots.

Of course, a great deal of the success attending this process of rubbing off the corners, as it were, in such a short time was due to the attractive prospect planned for a week's tour by the Choir to the United States for the spring of 1922. This idea of a tour had been before the members for three or four years, being first discussed in George Price's time. The decision to proceed had been made in the summer of 1921, and Percy Grainger, who had been engaged as the assisting soloist, had written two numbers for the choir, "Anchor Song," and "Dollar and a half a day," the former on words by Kipling, and the latter an arrangement of a Sea Chantey. Musgrove's death seemed to threaten the abandonment of the project, but, as soon as Ross arrived, it was determined to proceed.



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Five cities were visited, Duluth, March 10th, Milwaukee, March 11th, Chicago, March 13th, St. Paul, March 14th, Minneapolis, March 15th, and two concerts were given in the Board of Trade Auditorium before leaving Winnipeg. Five thousand people attended these two Winnipeg concerts, and the Mayor from the platform wished the Choir Godspeed. In the United States music leans more to the orchestral than to the choral side; the people are better listeners than music-makers, and choral singing, therefore, is not so general, nor so good, as in the British Empire. The impression created, therefore, by the Choir at the five concerts in that country was more profound than the Choir had believed possible. The following brief extracts from some of the press reviews of the Chicago concert are given here. Those in the other cities visited were similar in tone.

### *Chicago Daily News*

The Winnipeg Male Voice Choir made a distinct artistic success. They may be rated among the important musical events of the season.

### *Chicago Daily Journal*

They are a real male chorus, full-blooded, full-chested and commanding.

### *Chicago Evening Post*

Their technical skill was remarkable. It was choral singing worth hearing.

### *Chicago Daily Tribune*

Never in a long course of attendance upon musical events was any band of amateurs ever heard like this one. For that matter, I am unable at this moment to recall any professional organization that ever did better or in many instances nearly as well. The choir promises to come back. The sooner it comes back the better. It belongs among the big events.

### *Chicago Journal*

There is nothing the singers leave undone, nothing they are

## CRESCENDO

wrong in doing. Their tone has a sweetness which is the essence of music, and a smoothness that rivals that of a fine orchestra.

### *Chicago American*

They display the quintessence of mechanical assurance in the manner of shadings, their legato, pianissimo, forte and intermediate dynamics all above criticism. But even more striking is the extraordinary purity and clarity of their articulation. When the language is sung as these men sing it, English becomes beautiful.

The young English conductor was something new to American audiences, and his English accent announcing as an encore "Mighty lak a rose" caused a quick general smile to spread over the auditorium. By the time the choir reached Minneapolis, after six concerts on almost consecutive nights, it was a much finer instrument, and its conductor had achieved admirable control so that he could get the choir to do as he liked. At Minneapolis Ross acceded to insistent demands for a repeat of German's "Rolling Down to Rio," and electrified the choir by changing around the varying tempos, in a manner that would have been disastrous if the Choir had been less alert than it was. The *rallentandos* were slower, the *accelerandos* faster, the pauses more or less pronounced. It was very subtly and very cleverly done, and the Choir responded without a hitch, although after it was over they realized what a test he had given them.

On their return, a welcome-home concert was arranged, and again they sang to a full house in the Board of Trade Auditorium with Mrs. Burton Kurth, Russell White and Dezso Mahalek as the assisting solosits. Naturally the reception which had been accorded to the Choir in the United States, and which had been reported daily in the press, had penetrated to the consciousness of many people who had not previously heard the choir, and who had been mildly tolerant of the enthusiasm of their fellow citizens as being a sort of local froth.

At the welcome-home concert the larger percentage of the audience consisted of those curious to see and hear the Choir which





WINNIPEG PHILHARMONIC CHOIR—BERNARD NAYLOR, CONDUCTOR—1934



WINNIPEG AUDITORIUM

## *SYMPHONIE PUBLIQUE*

had achieved such a success on this tour, and clear evidence was recognizable of the influence on public appreciation not only of the Choir, but also the Festival. At the going away concerts the two audiences were almost entirely composed of friends of the Choir, who had been attending their concerts for four seasons and most of whom had been also attending the sessions of some of the last three Festivals. After five months' preparation, the Choir knew which items on the programme were most worth singing and which they sang best. The response from the audience was all that could be desired; the applause was all in the right place. On their return the choir was a much more highly polished instrument, and at the welcome-home concert they sang better than ever, but the punctuations of applause were, to the choir, all in the wrong place, all leaning to what might be described as the more "sugary" part of the programme. While, therefore, the leaven was working, it had only permeated a limited section of the body politic, and it was evident that there would always be room for further broadening of musical sensibility among many citizens.

## CHAPTER VII

### INTERMEZZO

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY — SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SITUATION —  
PUBLIC HALL SOLUTION — NEW AUDITORIUM — OPENING  
CONCERT.

There now took place a further development of the effect of the Club's activity in the community, which later on had important bearings on Winnipeg's musical growth. At the third Festival the adjudicator conducted a massed performance of one of the Test Pieces by the competing choirs. To Stanley Osborne and Norman Douglas came the idea of joining these choirs into a mixed choral society for the performance of major works — other than oratorios, so as not to conflict with the Oratorio Society. The matter was discussed quietly during the summer of 1921, and broached at a meeting of the executive of the Club in August, it being then decided to call a general meeting of those interested. Cyril Musgrove's death a few days later caused the matter to be deferred, but, early in the New Year, a petition having been presented to the executive to form such a body, a special general meeting was held on February 2nd, at which, not only was this proposition discussed, but a petition was also presented to the end that the Club should merge the Winnipeg Choral Society in this new organization. However, the meeting, while entirely sympathetic to the new idea, was unable to accept the responsibility, believing, at that time that it was hardly

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compatible with a Club of men that they should do so, seeing that the new body would include members of the other sex. Celibates! How the problem was dealt with will be seen in due course.

The orchestral situation during these years had been difficult because of its complexity and its conflicting interests and aspirations. Quite a few members of the Club belonged to the Winnipeg Musicians' Association or, as it might be called more colloquially, the "Union," and in those days the Union looked with a jealous eye on the amateur and kept a watchful eye on the professional who was willing to help out the amateur, or even play for his own enjoyment without remuneration. There were those also who looked with disfavour on any orchestra which included amateurs, whose places could be filled by professionals, although the latter might be of inferior ability, and although it was realized that a purely professional orchestra was not then feasible.

The musical clubs' orchestra formed in 1918 had played subject to no admission charge being made, and to the acknowledgment on the programmes that the professional members who were playing gratis were doing so by permission of the Union. This orchestra made its last appearance at the Board of Trade Pop Concert on January 25th, 1920, but this was facilitated by the fact that the Board of Trade had agreed to sponsor a three day series of concerts, which were held on February 13th, 14th and 15th, 1920, at which a Symphony Orchestra of professional players, assisted by some amateurs, under the conductorship of Henri Bourgeault would be the main feature.

During the next twelve months the Executive of the Club went into the possibilities of continuing an Amateur Orchestra, but financial and other restrictions met them at every turn. On January 12th, 1921, the Executive dealt with a request from its professional members that the Club organize a series of Five Subscription Sunday Symphony Concerts. The Club agreed to do this provided guarantees or subscriptions to the amount of \$4000.00 could be obtained, and they spent \$200.00 to find out if this could be done. The result of their appeal was less than \$600.00, and while

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this was disappointing and forced an abandonment of the scheme for that season and a return of the subscriptions, the result was probably due less to indifference, than to the lateness of the season, and the inadequate time in which to mature the campaign. The Club's idea was to have Hugh Ross conduct, and the situation was not made any easier by an announcement, made just as the Club decided upon action, that Chas. Manning, then conducting the Allen Theatre Orchestra, was also forming a Symphony Orchestra. The Club went the length of suggesting that they join forces and that Manning conduct some of the concerts and Ross the others, but even that advance met with a lukewarm reception. In this way the matter dragged.

The close of the 1921-1922 season, therefore, found three major problems facing the Club for which no solution had been found. The first of these, the mixed chorus for the performance of major works other than Oratorio, was solved a few months later when the Philharmonic Society (now Choir) came into being; the Symphony Orchestra did not emerge until the fall of 1923; and the public concert hall question had to pass through many phases before a *modus operandi* was discovered.

The various phases, through which the Public Hall question was to pass during the next half dozen years, were full of difficulty and complexity, and, to many people, the time spent in efforts to arrive at a satisfactory solution must have seemed at times singularly futile.

When representatives of the Men's Musical Club sat in conference with the Committee of the Board of Trade appointed to go into the matter of a Public Hall, there was early evidence that the primary points of view were somewhat apart. This was to be expected. The Club, when considering in 1920 the suggested erection of a Concert Hall immediately to the rear of the Music and Arts Building, was guided and influenced solely by a regard for the requirements of the musical activities in the community. With the experience of the purposes to which the Board of Trade Auditorium had been put in the three years it had been in operation prior to 1922



## INTERMEZZO

it was hoped that the Committee of the Board of Trade would realize the predominant part musical activities had played in the use of that building.

The very composition of the Board of Trade, however, instinctively impelled them to view the matter from an entirely different angle. The nature of their organization demanded that they should give first thought to its utility for Conventions, Industrial and Trade Exhibitions, and any purpose which they believed would foster the business and commercial life of the citizens. They appreciated the revenue accruing from musical events but their first approach was commercial, with the hope that such a hall could also be used for concerts and other musical functions. To this end their objective indicated a seating capacity of from 5,000 to 10,000 and a flat floor from which the seats were easily removable. The Club's idea of capacity was nearer 2000 than 3000, and the main floor on an inclined plane, with noiseless immovable seats, having before them the experience of the flat floor in the Board of Trade Auditorium.

It can be stated, however, that throughout the conferences between the Club and the Board of Trade, and in the deliberations of the different committees which subsequently, under varying circumstances, were appointed to deal with the problem, the attitude of the commercial interests was not rigid. They examined closely every possible scheme which offered any prospect of meeting the needs of both music and commerce, realizing the danger of erecting a building which, with the best will in the world, the musical bodies would be unable to use, thereby forcing a continuance of the use of such unsatisfactory facilities as then existed.

The Club, composed largely of business men, grasped readily the importance of erecting a Hall which could be used for such commercial purposes as were indicated, and endeavoured to meet this factor in the situation by every means possible, but it could not disregard its own experiences in Winnipeg, nor the evidence which it gathered of conditions in other large cities, including the experience of the Male Voice Choir on tour.

In the combined efforts to reach a conclusion adaptable to these

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varied purposes it was inevitable that a great deal of time should be consumed. It took months to achieve considerable progress in the conferences between the Board of Trade and the Club. This was to be expected as many aspects had to be investigated in a scheme of this kind. In the spring of 1924, however, Mayor Farmer, who had just been a few weeks in office, deemed the matter of sufficient importance to call a public meeting of representatives of all public and private bodies interested, and, at this meeting, held in the Council Chamber of the City Hall, representatives of the Board of Trade and of the Men's Musical Club reported the actions which each had taken and the results of their investigations. A committee was appointed, with Alderman Leech as Chairman, to review and report, and, after deliberations extending over months, it submitted a report to the Mayor, which was passed on to the various organizations concerned for consideration. A spell of inaction followed despite some pressure from the Club, and this inactivity was lengthened in the fall by the incidence of a municipal election, which resulted in the return of Ralph Webb to the mayoralty chair.

Mayor Webb has always been keenly alive to the necessity for a Public Hall, but in his first year of office he was so engrossed in developing conventions, industrial expansion, and highways, that other matters had to wait, and it was not until the spring of 1926 that he followed his predecessor's example by calling a similar public meeting to consider the matter. The committee appointed at this meeting, on which the Club was again represented, really accomplished more than any of its predecessors, and got nearest to the end for which it was elected. After some months of research it submitted its report, which was approved, and it finally succeeded in obtaining a charter by special act of the Legislature incorporating the "Greater Winnipeg Auditorium". This was in the spring of 1927. A technical hitch held up procedure for over a year, when the statutory meetings were held, and success appeared probable. The financial troubles, which culminated in the debacle of 1929, at this stage caused a further suspension of action, and there the matter rested until Mayor Webb again took action and succeeded, very

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largely on his own initiative, in inducing the Dominion Government, the Provincial Government, and the City, to unite in erecting, as an unemployment relief measure, the present Civic Auditorium.

Throughout all these developments the Club played an important part. It collected and furnished considerable, if not most of the data to be investigated by the various committees, it organized meetings of the musical bodies in order to reach common agreement on the musical requirements of the city, the Club Secretary was a member of the first committee, acted as Secretary of the Sites, Plans and Design Committee which submitted the scheme that was finally approved and on the basis of which incorporation was obtained, and, finally, was secretary of the incorporated company. The sequence of events seems to demonstrate that its efforts to keep the question alive before the Council and the public, and to secure action, exerted a not inconsiderable influence towards securing for Winnipeg its new Civic Auditorium.

The new Auditorium, while not measuring up to the ideas of the musical organizations of what a Public Concert Hall should be, nevertheless redounds greatly to the credit of its sponsors, designers, and builders, and should prove an important factor in the cultural life of the community. The drawbacks are in the Main Hall, which has a flat instead of an inclined floor, a boxed-in stage with a proscenium arch instead of an open platform, and a seating capacity (4,082) too large for the normal requirements of the city, although efforts are being made to meet this difficulty by shutting off part of the Hall when required. The acoustics, however, are very fine, and the musical authorities have much to be thankful for. In its first two seasons, the Auditorium has housed many important musical events given by both leading Winnipeg bodies and world-famed artists. A capacity audience presents an inspiring picture.

The opening Concert in the New Auditorium was given on Thursday, October 27th, 1932, by the Men's Musical Club. The programme was representative of Winnipeg's musical life, and about thirty-four hundred people accorded the performers an enthusiastic reception. It is fitting that the programme should be given here:

## CRESCENDO

1. (a) March from "Tannhauser" . . . . . *Wagner*  
 (b) Minuetto from Symphony in D major . . . . . *Mozart*

WINNIPEG JUNIOR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Conductor, *P. G. Padwick*

2. (a) "Love's Philosophy" . . . . . *Dehus*  
 (b) "J'ai Pleuré en rêve" . . . . . *Hue*  
 (c) "Danza Danza" . . . . . *Durante*  
 (d) "Life" . . . . . *Curran*

DORIS GODSON

At the piano, *Bernard Naylor*

3. (a) "Shepherds and Maidens" . . . . . *Loti*  
 (b) "Dream Pedlary" . . . . . *Armstrong Gibbs*  
 (c) "A Sea Chantey" . . . . . *Irish air arr. by R. MacLeod*

WINNIPEG BOY'S CHOIR

Conductor, *Ethel Kinley*

At the piano, *Ross Pratt*

4. (a) "Minstrels" . . . . . *Debussy*  
 (b) "The Little Shepherd" . . . . . *Debussy*  
 (c) "Polonaise in A", Op. 53 . . . . . *Chopin*

LEONARD HEATON

5. (a) "Now is the Month of Maying" . . . . . *Morley*  
 (b) "If my Song had airy pinions" . . . . . *Hahn*  
 (c) "The Fairy Song" . . . . . *George Dyson*

GENERAL WOLFE SCHOOL CHORUS

Conductor, *Gladys Anderson*

At the piano, *Thelma Guttormson*

6. (a) "Hear Me Ye Winds and Waves" (Scipio) . . . . . *Handel*  
 (b) "The Sands O' Dee" . . . . . *Fred Clay*  
 (c) "The Ringers" . . . . . *Herman Lohr*  
 (d) "My Love, She's but a Lassie yet" . . . . . *arr. David Stephen*

W. DAVIDSON THOMSON

At the piano, *Fred M. Gee*

## INTERMEZZO

7. (a) "Laughter and Tears" . . . . . Schubert  
(b) "My Love Dwelt in a Northern Land" . . . . . Elgar  
(c) "Clouds" . . . . . Walford Davies

DANIEL MCINTYRE COLLEGIATE CHORUS

Conductor, *Ethel Kinley*

At the piano, *Ross Pratt*

8. Concerto in E minor . . . . . Mendelssohn  
(a) Andante (b) Finale

FLORA MATHESON GOULDEN

At the piano, *Anna M. Hovey*

9. (a) "The Prisoner in the Caucasus", . . . . . Russian Folk Song  
arr. *K. Schindler*  
(b) "It's oh! to be a wild wind" . . . . . Elgar  
(c) "Feasting I watch" . . . . . Elgar  
(d) "The Agincourt Song" . . . . . arr. *Arthur Warrell*

WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHORUS

Conductor, *Bernard Naylor*

At the piano, *Stanley Osborne*

Another milestone had been passed.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SYMPHONIE PUBLIQUE

#### *Third Movement*

#### SECOND MALE VOICE CHOIR TOUR.

The second Male Voice Choir Tour, taken in the spring of 1923, was a more extensive and more ambitious affair than the first tour of the year before. It consisted of twelve concerts in the United States and Eastern Canada and lasted two weeks. Alberto Salvi was the assisting soloist at all the concerts, and he should have played also at the two going-away concerts in Winnipeg which preceded the Choir's departure for the South. He was held up at St. Paul, by the worst snowstorm of the winter, the railways north to Winnipeg being completely blocked for three or four days, and he reached Winnipeg too late to appear with the choir. However, he was able to give a complete recital on the night following the Choir Concerts. As in the previous year there was a Welcome Home Concert in Winnipeg after the Choir's return, and the soloist on that occasion was Ignace Friedman. The full list of cities in which the Choir appeared is given:

<i>February 19th . . .</i>	<i>St. Paul</i>	<i>February 25th .</i>	<i>Montreal</i>
<i>February 20th . . .</i>	<i>Eau Claire</i>	<i>February 26th</i>	<i>New York</i>
<i>February 21st . . .</i>	<i>Chicago</i>	<i>February 28th .</i>	<i>Brooklyn</i>
<i>February 22nd . .</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>March 1st . .</i>	<i>Detroit</i>
<i>February 23rd . .</i>	<i>Toronto</i>	<i>March 2nd . . .</i>	<i>Milwaukee</i>
<i>February 24th . .</i>	<i>Ottawa</i>	<i>March 3rd. . .</i>	<i>Minneapolis</i>

## SYMPHONIE PUBLIQUE

From first to last the Choir were on the platform on every night but one (February 27th), and the distance travelled was 4,000 miles, the longest jump being from New York to Detroit. The Choir occupied two sixteen section Pullmans chartered specially for the Tour, a few of the party overflowing into another Pullman, and it was only when they got to New York that they were able to change, for two nights, to a hotel. The total inclusive cost of the Tour was just short of twenty-eight thousand dollars, and the revenue about eleven thousand dollars less than this. Prior to leaving Winnipeg the Choir had raised a guarantee fund of about thirty-three thousand dollars, generously supported by many citizens besides the members of the Choir themselves, and on those guarantors, including the Choir members, a call of twenty per cent was made, or about six thousand dollars, the Choir assuming the burden of the balance. This was paid off a year or two later.

Musically the Tour was a complete success and fully justified the effort. The press notices, some of which are given here, were as glowing as on the occasion of the previous Tour:

*Chicago Tribune*

"If the Winnipeg Male Voice Choir is not careful, it is likely to be known as the best masculine singing organization in the world. It came back to Orchestra Hall last night and convinced me that with one exception I could not remember how many years it had been since there had been such singing, amateur or professional. That exception was when they came last year."

*Chicago Herald and Examiner*

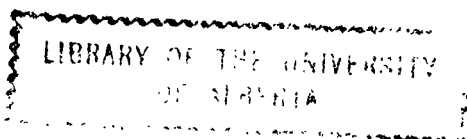
"One of the most unique singing organizations in the world. It is hoped they will return again, again, and again."

*Chicago Post*

"They are a male choir in the most exacting meaning of the term. They will be welcome visitors whenever they choose to sail southward on the wings of the north wind."

*Toronto Evening Telegram*

"To say that finer male chorus singing was never heard in



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Toronto than that of the Winnipeg Male Voice Choir in Massey Hall last night is only to state the truth . . . Before they had sung three bars they had caught up their audience on the full tide of their tonal and rhythmic enthusiasm that never ebbed throughout the whole programme."

### *Toronto Daily Star*

"Winnipeg's Male Voice Choir reawakened in many people last night the nameless thrill — whatever it is — that comes only from a men's chorus, when the men's chorus is up and doing . . . Their attacks are never painfully obvious. The men just sing into the pieces. They sing with a sense of nuance and of tone colour and of rhythmic variation that is positively inspiring."

### *Toronto Globe*

"Last night the famous Winnipeg Male Voice Choir came to Toronto; they sang and conquered . . . The final verdict seemed to be that Winnipeg can boast of the best trained and most satisfactory male choir in Canada."

### *Ottawa Citizen*

"I have heard famous European male voice choruses such as the Vienna Male Choir, and attended one of the great Swiss male voice choral competitions at Zurich but the magnificent work as demonstrated by our Winnipeg visitors surpasses anything in male choral work I have ever heard."

### *New York Herald*

"The singing of the choir met the requirements of the music with admirable results. The choir's attack was decisive and its precision, unanimity, and intonation ever admirable. The spirited style in which the choir performed was exhilarating."

### *New York Evening Mail*

"Just to hear 'Deep River' sung as it was by the Winnipeg Male Choir would have been worth the trip from Canada alone. These friendly neighbours have waited seven years before



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making their metropolitan debut and we can only say that the loss has been ours."

### *New York Post*

"As a chorus of men it is undoubtedly in the very front rank."

### *New York Times*

"The choir sings with great enthusiasm, with a fine quality of tone, a rich pianissimo, a sonorous forte, and commendable accuracy and finish."

### *New York Tribune*

"The prevailing unity spirit and clearness of enunciation, in the singing showed the Winnipeg Choir as a first class choral organization."

### *New York World*

"It is an interesting commentary upon New York's interest in choral music that a Club of Canadian business men can travel three thousand miles and show us male chorus singing of a quality that we rarely hear."

### *Detroit Evening Times*

"Altogether it was a performance that ought to ensure the choir a packed house if it elects to come back."

### *Detroit News*

"I sought last night for a memory of a grand opera chorus of recent years possessing the precision, fluency and sensibility of this male choir and could think of none."

### *Minneapolis Tribune*

"The people who heard them last night will carry in their memories for many years the evening of song they enjoyed . . . The very highest type of male chorus singing."

The Choir gained for itself a position as the leading Male Voice Choir on the Continent; and to many people in the United States Winnipeg is to this day identified in their minds as the home of the

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Male Voice Choir. In making the Tour the Choir definitely accomplished what it set out to do. It demonstrated that Winnipeg, besides being the greatest physical wheat centre in the world, and the chief city of a great expanse of prairie, a city now grown beyond the outpost of Empire stage, possessed business men, some of whom were able to give to the world an expression of the art of music of which any city of any size might justifiably be proud, with the corollary, that life in Winnipeg must have many attractions and compensations in addition to its admitted commercial activity. It was an experience which those who took part in it will never forget; it was carried out at high pressure with little or no time in which to relax, and could only have been undertaken by men imbued with enthusiasm for their art, and the conviction that they had something to offer worthy of the city in which they lived.

In reviewing both Tours some reflections may be allowed. Seven of the seventeen concerts were given in theatres, or halls, from a stage or platform equipped with proscenium and flies, and in every such case the members of the Choir were conscious of a more or less deadening effect on the tone. There was a noticeable lack of resonance and it was more of an effort to get their voices over. This was not so apparent to the audiences, as it was the kind of effect to which they were accustomed in these Auditoriums, which by the way were the best obtainable in each city.

In New York, Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis, the concerts were given in the hall in which the Symphony Orchestra played, and the vocal freedom was delightful, and gradations of tone and variations of colour received their full significance. In Orchestra Hall, Chicago, for instance, when the opening number, Maunders' "Border Ballad" ended on a final triple *forte* chord, there was no appreciable interval between the sudden clean cut release of the chord and the responding applause. The acoustics were so sharp that it almost seemed that the audience came in on the beat!

That, by the way, was one of the most electrifying performances of that popular number that the Choir ever gave. Hugh Ross, whose conducting was always subject to subtle, slight, unrehearsed

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variations of interpretation, as the spirit moved him, was that night possessed with the marching rhythm, and the twitching of his shoulder and quick sharp flick of the baton were so inspiring and infectious that the Choir was carried out of itself.

This sensitiveness to acoustics on the part of the choir is comprehensible, having regard to the kind of music in their repertoire which demands so much delicacy of treatment and colour and accuracy of detail. In the Board of Trade Auditorium, in Winnipeg, with its long tunnel shape, the singers had the greatest difficulty in hearing each other and even themselves sing; the voices seemed to go away from them into the void, and, therefore, the difficulty of maintaining pitch was always present, and demanded attention, both from Choir and Conductor, which should have been directed elsewhere.

When singing Protheroe's "De Sandman" at Milwaukee, the baritones, who carried the air of the refrain while the other parts sang *bouche fermé*, suddenly and without notice developed a ravishing *pianissimo* in their head tones. They had never before sung it with such remarkable unanimity of tone colour. Ross, quickly sensing what had happened, restrained the tone of the whole Choir, and at the close one could almost catch a sigh of enjoyment from all the singers.

That Choir never lost this atmosphere either throughout the Tour nor after their return home, and this unanimity of tone in the baritones was so striking that not a few people asserted it to be a trick, claiming that the tune was being sung by one voice while the others merely mouthed the words! Daniel Protheroe himself was at the Chicago concert and said to one of the boys that he never knew before that there was music like that in his little part song.

The Choir was put to a rather searching pitch test in Holst's "Dirge of Two Veterans" written for chorus and brass. At Chicago the brass parts were played by members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and at Minneapolis by members of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. The choir at the opening sings quite a number of bars unaccompanied and towards the close of this section there is

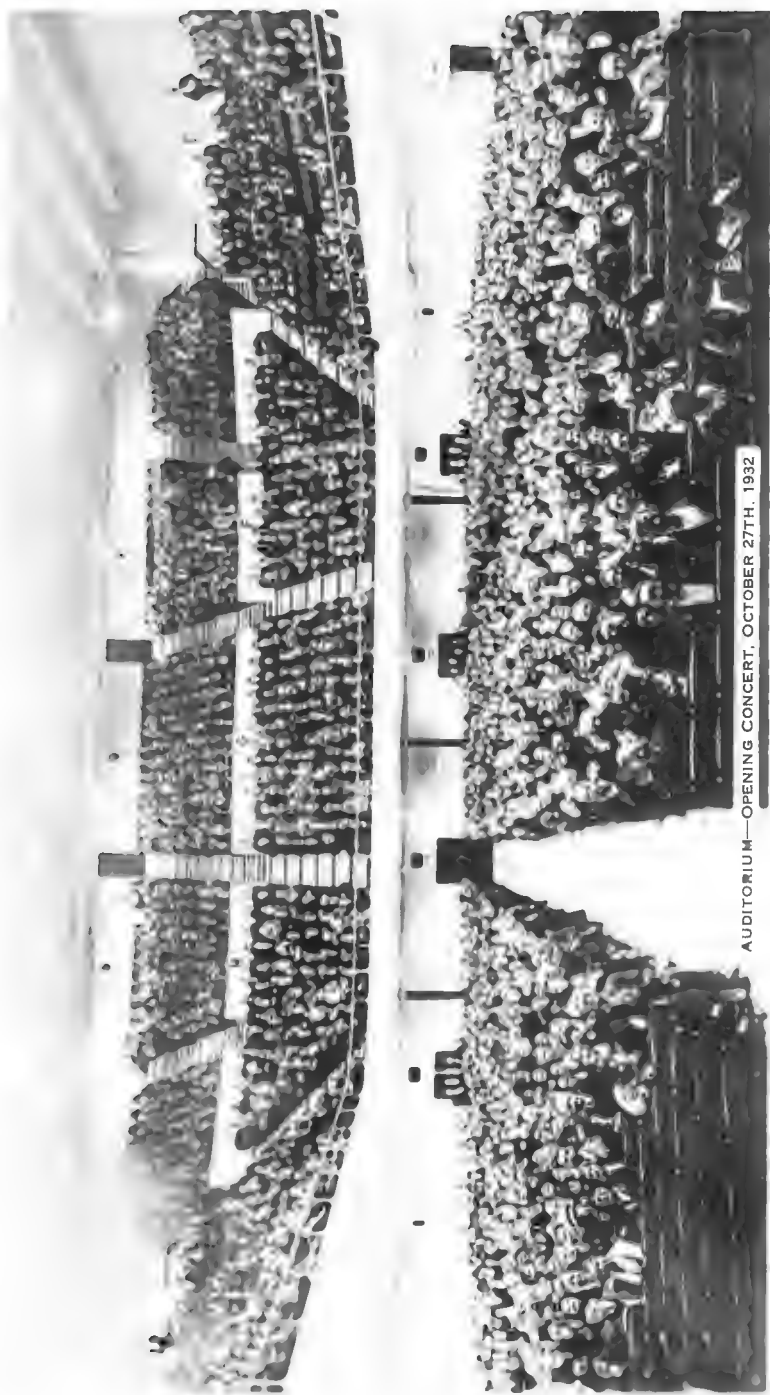
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a delightful but awkward modulation just before the brass enter. A somewhat similar development takes place towards the close where, after some *pianissimo a cappella* singing, the muted trumpets come in with a bugle call. The slightest variation in pitch at either point would have created a distinctly noticeable flaw in an otherwise well nigh perfect picture, but the choristers were equal to the occasion.

The practice of the Choir in engaging for their concerts some well-known artist, who usually makes three appearances on the programme interspersed between groups of numbers rendered by the Choir, has tended to generate a mild form of competition, which has been remarked on by more than one of these soloists. It is psychic more than tangible, and the members of the Choir themselves have not been entirely blind to it. At all their concerts, to most of the audience, choral music had the greater appeal, but there was always present a goodly minority whose primary interest lay in the soloist. It was interesting, therefore, to watch the desire of the choral group to hear as much as possible of the Choir, while the remainder were just as keen for the recall of the soloist. Each time the Choir rose to sing there was in the air a sort of feeling that it had to recover the audience from the enthusiasm roused by the soloist, while the soloist on the other hand felt this urge to a greater extent because of the character of the audience. This was largely subconscious but it could not but have the effect of making both choir and soloist rise to the occasion more effectively than if this gentle competition had not existed. It may be that this factor has contributed not a little to the attractiveness that has surrounded the Choir Concerts for the past sixteen years.

At the New York concert in Carnegie Hall, however, there was a definite deliberate effort to sway the audience towards the soloist. Before and after every appearance of Salvi, an individual, seemingly perched away up in the top gallery, applauded vociferously with hands that appeared to be equipped with clappers. Certainly no hands of man could have produced the sound. He showed up again at the Brooklyn Concert two nights later, and his clapping was





AUDITORIUM—OPENING CONCERT, OCTOBER 27TH, 1932

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distinctly visible to the members of the Choir. So far as could be judged, it did not have the effect aimed at, but it was a unique experience with a lone representative of the old clique system at one time so much in vogue in Paris. The Choir members were vastly amused.

At most of the cities visited the Choir was entertained, usually at lunch, by some local organization and at one of these affairs it was delightful to be welcomed as the "Chor from the Providence of Manitoba!" "Chor" was intelligible, as the speaker was afterwards given credit, by one of his friends, for facility in three languages "two in English and one in German." But it was refreshing to hear Manitoba given an appellation which savours more of the name "God's Country," attributed, by many of its citizens, to that part of the North American Continent immediately South of the forty-ninth parallel.

The kindly courtesy extended to the Choir at these functions was very delightful, but, at one of the Canadian Cities, a new arrangement was made. The members were informed that luncheon would be served at a leading hotel, probably with the considerate object of ensuring the best meal in the most agreeable surroundings. At the close of the luncheon, however, each man was handed the bill for his lunch.

In one of the cities in the United States the singers were taken in cars for an extended drive round the city. It was a lovely day and the drive was through a beautiful section of the city. Of course, many Americans are intensely proud of their country, and in many cases even prouder of their own city. On this particular day the manner of conducting that drive, and the directions to the various points of interest, rather encouraged the idea that the tourists were plutocrats all interested in million dollar deals in real estate! In one of the cars the spokesman took hours to recover from the shock of receiving from one of his guests, a Scotsman, a polite refusal to a sociable invitation to partake of soul-uplifting refreshment from a container usually carried in the rear portion of one's sartorial equipment!

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This exuberance, while in many ways excusable was, at times, a little embarrassing to men who felt a warm affection for their own town. At one luncheon, where it was a trifle blatant, with a suspicious suggestion of absorption, one of the members of the Choir on being called upon to speak, was impelled to remind their hosts that one of the main objects of the Tour was to endeavour to correct erroneous impressions that might exist regarding life and conditions in Canada, as well as to assimilate broader ideas of their friendly neighbours. He pointed out that the tendency to regard the Dominion as a land of snow and ice and wild prairie was quite as wrong as any idea that Kentucky produced nothing but race horses and rye whiskey.

He told of one Southern farmer who sold out and moved to Saskatchewan. On the eve of the departure of the family the youngest daughter, in saying her evening prayer, ended with the valediction, "Goodbye, God, we're going to Canada." When the laughter had subsided, he explained how for a few years thereafter letters from their friends kept rubbing in this joke on them to such an extent that the new Canadians, who by this time knew what life in Canada was really like, thought it about time to disclose the truth. They, therefore, wrote back saying that the reported end of the little girl's prayer was being misquoted. What she had said was "Good, by God, we're going to Canada!"

On the whole, however, there was not much opportunity for incident. Arrival on the day of the concert and a rush departure immediately after the performance afforded little scope for marked impressions. The Choir would have liked to remain over and make closer contacts, to do more than merely shake hands with and say goodbye to friends who at every concert came behind stage, full of enthusiasm and expressions of delight. The Choir's job, however, was to sing and pass on quickly, and faithfully this was done.



## CHAPTER IX

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### *Fourth Movement*

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUSICAL COMPETITION FESTIVAL.

COMPETITION n (L. com, together, and peto, to seek). The act of competing; mutual contest or striving for the same object; rivalry; a trial of skill proposed as a test of superiority or comparative fitness. In a COMPETITION the persons strive to attain a common end, and may have the most friendly feelings towards each other; in RIVALRY there is rather the desire of one to supplant or get before another, and usually a certain hostility.

(Annandale's Concise English Dictionary)

Two months later, in May 1923, the Fifth Manitoba Musical Competition Festival was held in the Board of Trade Auditorium. The increased entry list required the services of three adjudicators, two of these coming from the British Isles in the persons of Prof. (now Sir) Granville Bantock and H. Plunket Greene, the third being T. Tertius Noble, who had already officiated at three previous Festivals. With the rapid rate of expansion among Canadian Festivals it was fortunate that, from this time onwards, Canada was able to call upon a succession of distinguished British musicians, experienced in the specialized art of adjudicating as differentiated from examining.

These British adjudicators, who have graced the Canadian Festivals during the past dozen years, are the product of the Festival movement in the British Isles of which the British Federation of Musical Competition Festivals is the co-ordinating central

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body. The Federation was incorporated by Act of Parliament on November 10th, 1921, and the Manitoba Festival was the first Canadian Festival to become affiliated, the certificate of membership being dated June 26th, 1922. There are now over two hundred Festivals in the British Empire as against around one hundred at the time of incorporation in 1921, most of which had come into existence in the twentieth century, and had struggled on through the war years, many of them being saved by the watchful assistance of the Carnegie Fund.

The use of competition as a stimulus in the field of art is not a new one; the Welsh Eisteddfodau have long featured this elemental force in deciding the occupancy of the famed Bardic Chair, and J. S. Curwen had held a kind of Festival on competitive lines in the East End of London in the late seventies, or early eighties. But the modern Festival idea as applied to music owes its genesis to a lady, Miss Mary Wakefield, Sedgewick House, Kendal, in the north west of England, who, in the words of Mr. Plunket Greene, "all unaware of what she was doing for the country's music, started the Country Festival.

"She suggested to the neighbours around that it would be great fun for families or groups or villages to learn some part songs in the winter and come and compete with one another in a Tournament of song some time in the following year." The idea caught on and in August 1885 "the first contest took place in the covered tennis court at Sedgewick." It was a humble beginning. In her own words "three quartets turned up and sang Steven's time-honoured part song "You Spotted Snakes" as badly as may be."

Other people heard of the new idea which began to spread. "The lady of the manor in Cornwall or the parson's wife in Kent got the neighbours together and spread the news" and little Festivals sprang up all over the country. It must be admitted that in those early days the Festival owed everything to the vision of the gentler sex. Since those pioneer days the idea has been expanded, polished and perfected to a remarkable extent, but in the picture of these quartets meeting at Sedgewick House and singing against each other

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"for fun" lies the true spirit of the Festival.

That is the basic principle on which the Club has endeavoured to build the Manitoba Festival. The members believe that the Musical Competition Festival movement is probably the most potent factor in operation to-day effecting the greatest advancement in musical intelligence among the greatest number of people at the same time. During the years it has been functioning the Club has striven by every means at its command to maintain this instrument in the highest and purest state of efficiency. The rules have been drafted so as to preserve absolute fairness towards every competitor, and the competitions are conducted with the same ideal. Classes are provided for every field of legitimate musical endeavour for which there is a need, and the test pieces are selected with greatest care as to musical standard, equal care being taken to see that they are attractive to the competitors who perform them and to the members of the audience who listen to them. The adjudicators are musicians of the highest standing on both sides of the Atlantic, gifted and trained for their peculiar tasks, men whose integrity and honour are beyond question, and whose decisions have been given without fear or favour.

Adjudicating is an art that demands a fine judicial mind capable of weighing the work of one competitor against that of others, a task so different from examination work where a specified percentage is sufficient to pass. It also demands ability to give, from the public platform, logical analytical reasons for the decisions arrived at. It is given to few adjudicators to have that nicely balanced mind that can draw a fine distinction between two competitors whose performances at times are somewhat different, yet both showing so many points of excellence that it is hard to decide which is the better. One British authority stated that there were fewer than ten adjudicators equipped as with a mental stop-watch showing split seconds. There are many who can reach a logical reasoned decision where the difference, though small, is quite definite, but when it comes to a minute difference they seem to go "phlooeey" mentally, and either give a haphazard award or declare both competitors

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equal. There are cases of such equal awards but very few with the best adjudicators.

At the Manitoba Festival some years ago there were two church choirs so different yet so excellent that they afforded a notable example of this. The test piece was Rheinberger's "Why Assemble the Heathen," and out of five choirs two obviously stood out. One of these was well equipped technically, the other not quite so good in this respect, but their interpretation showed a rather better spiritual comprehension of the music. The scale of marks on which the adjudicators had to work provided fifty per cent. for technique and fifty per cent. for interpretation. The adjudicator spoke for twenty minutes on the work of these two choirs giving a detailed and clear analysis of each, both from a technical and interpretative point of view, and finally the award went to the choir with the better interpretation. The difference in marks was one point, it might better have been decimal point one. It was so narrow that the adjudicator could have wished that either choir had been a shade better on its weaker side. To illustrate this the adjudicator told of how on one occasion he was crossing the English Channel which that day was not very kind. He noticed a lady holding grimly to the rail, gazing seaward and went forward to speak to her. She turned a set, rather unhappy face to him and murmured "Don't say a word — a hair would do it!"

At a later Festival there was another display of fine discriminating insight given by one of these distinguished visitors. It was a junior pianforte solo class with eighty-nine entries of which six had been chosen at a preliminary test to play in a final. The adjudicator explained that the standard of work by a number of the players was so high and uniform that he would have liked to select two dozen for the final, but he stretched his discretion to the limit in bringing up half a dozen. It was discovered afterwards that, all unknown to the adjudicator, five of the six came from the same studio!

The Festival is so arranged that those whose interest lie along a particular line can attend a preliminary competition at which com-

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petitors numbering on occasion close to a hundred appear. The main sessions, at which several competitions of varying character are held, appeal to the general musician or music lover. The Festival, by these means, provides a medium by which both competitors and audience are given an insight into the meaning and spirit of music, through the reasoned skilled analyses of the expert adjudicators. The intriguing allurement of friendly competition is the loadstone; there is nothing more thrilling than the vision of boys and girls, men and women, vying with each other in their efforts to do something good, lovely and beautiful (in other things as well as music), and each trying to do it well and better than the other.

The audience goes home with knowledge and enlightenment which could never be assimilated from endless concerts by great artists without some study, which, to many people, is too much trouble.

The success of the Festival has been both material and cultural, evidence of this being plentiful. It has expanded from four days to thirteen days; entries have increased from 274 to 1197, individual competitors from 2500 to 11,301, and estimated public admissions from 2000 to 31,000. These tangible results are impressive, but the real results of the Festival lie in the increased music-making by the people themselves, in the greater intelligence with which much larger audiences listen to many times more performances by visiting artists than was the case not so many years ago. To listen to six thousand school children sing beautiful music in a beautiful way, with the knowledge that there are many more doing the same but unable to appear at the Festival, is an experience never to be forgotten, and gives one furiously to think. Here's what Mr. Greene said in a talk broadcasted over the B.B.C. in May, 1933.

"We say in the Federation 'There is nothing to beat Winnipeg in the British Empire.' The singing of the winning children's choir (the General Wolfe School) at Winnipeg was a thing of such beauty as this old stager never expects to hear again. Those children were the final winners out of eleven whole afternoons of children's choirs!"

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Arising out of the Festival in its relation to music in the schools, a significant feature has been the development of the regular class-room teacher as a conductor and choral trainer of children.

Music is, of course, a regular subject in the school curriculum and is taught more or less efficiently in all grades. But it was left to the Festival to provide the stimulus which inspired the emergence, from the ordinary day schools, of a type of teacher with a real gift in this particular department, a type which might never have discovered itself but for the Festival.

In the Syllabus there have always been classes for School Choruses, divided according to grades, but in some schools this tended towards selectivity of voices under specialized teachers. Some wonderful singing has been done in these classes but modesty tended to deter the ordinary teacher from taking part in the Festival in such company.

In 1928, therefore, the Festival Executive conceived the happy idea of including in the Syllabus a series for Class-room Choirs in which each Choir was required to consist of not less than seventy-five per cent. of the scholars on the class-room register, and the teacher had to devote at least seventy-five per cent. of regular school hours to teaching general class subjects other than music. The result has been not only that the standard of conducting and choir training has improved tremendously on a broader basis, but many of these ordinary teachers have been inspired to develop their gifts in the wider spheres of school choir work and of children's choirs generally.

What is just as important, if not more so, is that this training on a higher plane is permeating the entire school system in a remarkable manner and the effect on community life is becoming more far-reaching and searching than is realized by most people.

At the fifteenth festival (1933) an incident occurred illustrating the brightness of the children and their quickness and sense of fun. Dr. Staton was judging about five boys' choruses (public schools), and he said to the first choir who sang:

"What was the matter with your singing, boys, were you flat or sharp?"





WINNIE & EDNA'S CHOIR—ETHEL KINLEY, CONDUCTOR—1914



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"Flat," came a chorus of replies.

"And how!" ejaculated a boy in choir number three.

After the laughter had subsided Dr. Staton proceeded with his adjudication and when he came to choir number three he put the same question:

"Now boys, were you sharp or flat?"

"Both!" came like a flash from the same boy.

That evening Dr. Staton retailed the incident to the audience, and at the close a boy came up to him and, asking him to autograph a programme, explained quietly that he was the boy who had said "And how!"

To the executive, one of the most enheartening features is the manner in which competitors and audience enter into the spirit of the Festival, and co-operate with the officials in every way to maintain the ideals for which all are striving. To close observers at recent Festivals there have come many thrills as they sensed, in the punctuations of applause by the audience, a discriminating responsiveness to the performances of the competitors, that, to a greater extent than in earlier Festivals, endorsed — in advance — the subsequent decisions of the adjudicators. The audience had travelled a long way towards a fuller understanding of the language and meaning of good music. Competitors also seemed to appreciate this "expertness" on the part of the audience. They seemed to realize that their efforts were being taken seriously and intelligently, and that the audience, as well as the adjudicator, was to be trusted. There was now no point in the sympathy of friends who might consolingly disagree with the decisions of the adjudicator. The umpire was right, not because he was the umpire, but because they and the audience knew he was right. And they liked it! More than one adjudicator also has remarked on the fine sporting spirit amongst the competitors which reaches its highest point in the attitude of the school children who spontaneously cheer (not themselves) but every worthy winner.

Words are almost valueless in endeavouring to explain the allurements, the fascination, the appeal of the Festival both to those with more or less musical knowledge and to many who rather

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over-avow their lack of such knowledge. This fascination cannot be felt by proxy, it can only be experienced in person.

In Western Canada the movement has grown to such an extent that, in addition to the necessity for co-operation in the appointment of adjudicators, many other problems of common interest arise, the settlement of which cannot be achieved by correspondence. The need for a Conference became so insistent that in 1926 representatives from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia met at Calgary, and these Conferences have continued to be held annually in each province in rotation. Their scope has been extended to include all Canadian Festivals, and in later years representatives from Ontario and from district sub-festivals, which have sprung up in each of the provinces, were present. Many general matters other than those of a business nature came under review, such as development of music in schools, university recognition of music, classes, test pieces, programme building, prize giving, (which is being gradually decreased and in Manitoba has been discontinued), and the very important development of district festivals in all the provinces. In the broadcast referred to Mr. Green says,

"I wish I could tell you all the wonders of the movement in Canada. Money prizes are "tabu". There is not a money prize in Canada, and all its Festivals belong to the Federation. They hold an Annual Conference at which they work out plans for the coming year for their combined benefit. Their organization is well-nigh perfect."

One of the most important and far-reaching actions of these Conferences was the appointment of British musicians to represent the Canadian Festivals in the British Federation. In 1928 Hugh S. (now Sir Hugh) Robertson was appointed and in 1929 Mr. Arthur Collingwood was chosen as his colleague. When the latter was appointed Professor of Music at the University of Saskatchewan in 1932 his place was taken by Mr. Harry Plunket Greene.

The Canadian Festivals have relied on these representatives to see that Canada was served by adjudicators who would maintain a

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continuity in high standards of adjudicating — the first time that such an idea was put into effect by any region in the British Isles, or, in fact, in the Empire.

The value of the services rendered by these British representatives can hardly be overestimated. Without the assistance of their knowledge and judgment, the difficulties in making contact with those best fitted for this work would be vastly increased and Canada is very much in their debt.

The corner stone of the Festival is the adjudicator and from the first, Canada has been fortunate in the high standing of both Canadian and British adjudicators. They represent the cream of their profession (see Appendix D), and the influence they have exerted has been profound and widespread. This has only been made possible by the fine spirit of co-operation which has always existed among all the Canadian Festivals, and without which it would have been impossible to attract these visitors from across the seas.

The Sixteenth Festival (April 1934) broke new ground in being ushered in with an Inaugural Concert at which the programme was given by four leading Winnipeg musical organizations, the Male Voice Choir, Philharmonic Choir, Boys' Choir, and Symphony Orchestra. Practically all the four hundred performers had come through previous Festivals, and the concert was an actual product of the Festival. The three Festival adjudicators were present, and were unanimous in their expressed considered opinion that no city on this continent, and few on the other side of the Atlantic, could have presented such a performance of important works without outside assistance.

For the first time in the history of the movement in Canada the Governor-General and the Countess of Bessborough made active personal contact with the Festival by attending the Inaugural Concert. There was a capacity audience and the scene was one of the most brilliant of the season. There is little doubt that their presence afforded considerable stimulus to the Festival as a whole, the public admissions for the first time exceeding the thirty thousand mark.

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The programme is reprinted here:

1. OVERTURE . . . . . "The Mastersingers" . . . . . *Wagner*  
WINNIPEG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Conductor: *Bernard Naylor*
2. "The Origin of Fire" . . . . . *Sibelius*  
(For Baritone Solo, Male Voices and Orchestra.)  
J. ROBERTO WOOD, WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHOIR  
AND WINNIPEG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Conductor: *Bernard Naylor*
3. FOUR SONGS  
(a) "The Moon" . . . . . *Schubert*, arr. *W. G. Whittaker*  
(b) "Let Us Dance" . . . . . *Handel*  
(c) "Full Fathom Five" . . . . . *Thomas Dunhill*  
(d) "Sea Horses" . . . . . *Thomas Dunhill*  
WINNIPEG BOYS' CHOIR  
Conductor: *Ethel Kinley*  
Accompanist: *Ross Pratt*
4. "How Mighty Are The Sabbaths" . . . . . *Holst*  
(For Treble Voices, Male Voices and Orchestra)  
(First Performance in Canada)  
WINNIPEG BOYS' CHOIR, WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHOIR  
and WINNIPEG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Conductor: *Bernard Naylor*
5. TWO PIECES FOR STRING ORCHESTRA—  
(a) "Ostinato for Double String Orchestra" . . . *Bernard Naylor*  
(b) "Ostinato from St. Paul's Suite for Strings" . . . *Holst*  
WINNIPEG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Conductor: *Bernard Naylor*
6. "Rhapsody" . . . . . *Brahms*  
(For Contralto Solo, Male Voices and Orchestra)  
MAY LAWSON, WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHOIR and  
WINNIPEG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Conductor: *Bernard Naylor*

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7. THREE UNACCOMPANIED SONGS—  
    (a) "Bushes and Briars" .....  
            *Essex Tune, set by R. Vaughan Williams*  
    (b) "Hymn a la Nuit" ..... *Rameau*  
    (c) "The Wanderer" ..... *Elgar*  
            WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHOIR  
            Conductor: *Bernard Naylor*
8. "Toward the Unknown Region" . . . . *R. Vaughan Williams*  
            WINNIPEG PHILHARMONIC CHOIR  
            and WINNIPEG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
            Conductor: *Bernard Naylor*

## CHAPTER X

### SONGS *of the* CHERUBIM

#### FOUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOYS' CHOIR.

In the fall of 1925 the Club took its next step in the sphere of community enterprise. On October 10th, the Executive instituted the Winnipeg Boys' Choir and appointed Miss Ethel Kinley conductor.

Since the inception of the Competition Festival the singing of children's choirs had improved enormously. Dr. McIntyre, Superintendent of Schools, said in 1919 that the first Festival had done more for music in the Schools than the previous thirty years of effort. Only those who heard the singing that year and who heard it in 1925 were able to realize what a further remarkable advance had been made, an advance which became more noticeable in later Festivals. As Dr. Staton remarked at a later Festival the amazing feature of the singing of these children was not that one heard some strikingly fine work, but that, out of more than one hundred choirs, there was not a bad one in the lot.

In these choirs girls predominated to a marked degree. There was one class for boys only, and in later Festivals this was increased to two, based on an age qualification, but, while in most choirs there were some boys, the girls greatly outnumbered them. Outside of the schools, there were quite a few children's choirs, but these again were all girls, and if it had not been for some Anglican Churches, who found places for a few boys, the only singing by boys

## SONGS OF THE CHERUBIM

would have been that done in the schools. This, of course, was quite considerable, but the Club felt that some impetus could be given to choral work by boys in a selected choir, and under a teacher who would give more than ordinary attention to the study and development of boys' voices.

In asking Miss Kinley to undertake this charge, the executive of the Club paid tribute to the fine work she was doing with children's voices, boys especially, in the Earl Grey School and to the successes which her choirs had achieved in the Festival. It was in 1921 that Miss Kinley first appeared at the Festival as a conductor, and that year her little singers secured third place. At later Festivals the effects of her influence and teaching became increasingly apparent, and in recent Festivals her successes have been striking. In one Festival she conducted eight choral test pieces with an average marking of ninety-three per cent. and four school orchestral test pieces with an average of eighty-five, or an average over all of ninety. With so much fine singing by children at the Festival being done under the direction of so many efficient teachers, it may seem invidious to direct attention to Miss Kinley, but all these teachers themselves have united in according to her full credit for leadership in this particular field, the kind of subconscious leadership so essential and inspiring in any community effort.

The new choir appeared at a concert sponsored by the Club in the Walker Theatre on December 28th, 1925, as it also did at a similar concert one year later, but the first concert by the Choir itself was given in Central Church on April 8th, 1926. The music which the boys had been singing in school and at the Festival enabled Miss Kinley to present a programme which included works by Purcell, Handel, Schubert, Morley, Arne, Stanford, Parry, and German. The Choir has continued to give an Annual Concert each spring to the delight of appreciative audiences, and the musical standard of performance as well as the discriminating taste displayed in programme preparation, has been more than maintained. As an example, the programme presented at their Seventh Annual Concert on March 31st, 1932, is given here:

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1. EVENING HYMN . . . . . Henry Purcell (1658-1695)
2. (a) "Come and Trip It" ("L'Allegro") . . . . .  
George Frederick Handel (1685-1759)  
(b) "Art Thou Troubled" ("Dove Sei") . . . . .  
George Frederick Handel  
(c) "Shepherds and Maidens" . . . . .  
Antonio Lotti (1667-1740)
3. PIANO SOLO—"The Coming of Arthur" (first movement  
from "Eroica" Sonata) . . . . .  
Edward Alexander Macdowell (1861-1908)
4. VOCAL ENSEMBLE—  
(a) "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" . . . . .  
Harmonized by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)  
(b) "Water Parted from the Sea" . . . . .  
Thomas Augustine Arne (1710-1778)
5. VOCAL DUET—"Sweet Kate" . . . . . Robert Jones (1597-1617)
6. (a) "What the Birds Think" . . . . . Franz Schubert (1797-1828)  
arr. by Edward C. Bairstow  
(b) "Sailors' Song to the Dioscuri" . . . . . Franz Schubert  
(c) "Hark, Hark! the Lark" . . . . . Franz Schubert
7. (a) "Clown's Song" ("Twelfth Night") . . . . .  
Norman F. Demuth  
(b) "Dream Pedlary" . . . . . C. Armstrong Gibbs  
(c) "The Fiddler of Dooney" . . . . . Robin Milford
8. VIOLIN SOLOS—  
(a) "Praeludium" . . . . . Bach-Kreisler  
(b) "Siciliano and Rigaudon" . . . . . Francoeur-Kreisler
9. VOCAL SOLOS—  
(a) "The Three Ravens" . . . . . Traditional, 16th Century  
(b) "Oh, Had I Jubal's Lyre" . . . . . George Frederick Handel
10. PIANO SOLO—Prelude from F major ("English") Suite. . . . .  
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)



## SONGS OF THE CHERUBIM

11. VOCAL QUARTETTES—
  - (a) "Come, Pretty Wag" . . . . . *Martin Peerson (1580-1650)*  
transcribed by *Peter Warlock*
  - (b) "The Shepherd" . . . . . *Harry Brook*
12. (a) "Rantin', Rovin' Robin" . . . . . *Scottish Folk Song*  
 (b) "Early One Morning" . . . . .  
   *English air, with descant by Geoffrey Shaw*  
 (c) "A Sea Chantey" . . . . . *Irish air, arr. by Robert McLeod*

It was entirely a boys' concert, the instrumentalists alone not being members of the choir.

In addition to these concerts the choir has made each year several appearances in different parts of the city, and it has also taken part annually at the Festival. The average markings for sixteen test pieces at the Festivals is eighty-eight per cent. It has also broadcast over the local radio station. Everywhere it has appeared it has created a fine impression. The choir numbers fifty-five voices, and the regularity with which the boys attend rehearsals and rally round their conductor is an object lesson to many adult choirs.

## CHAPTER XI

### ENTR'ACTE

HUGH ROSS — DOUGLAS CLARKE — PETER TEMPLE — BERNARD  
NAYLOR.

It was not to be expected that a conductor with the gifts and outlook of Hugh Ross would remain indefinitely in Winnipeg. Sooner or later the call to a larger sphere was inevitable, and in 1927, after six years of broadening activity, he moved to New York. He had been appointed conductor of the Scola Cantorum, the most important body of mixed voice singers in the United States, attaining a position which he continues to occupy (1934). During these six years he had brought the Male Voice Choir to a high state of efficiency, the Philharmonic was a real factor in the city's musical life, and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra was *un fait accompli*. These were the outward signs of his sojourn here but his leadership left its impress on many other forms of musical life.

Douglas Clarke his successor arrived in the city in October 1927 and quickly swung into the good graces of all with whom he came into contact. His gifts were also outstanding and possessed an individuality all their own. Under his leadership the Male Voice Choir took on new colour, as Douglas leaned more to the choral than orchestral side, although, after leaving Winnipeg, he developed more on the latter side. The work of the Philharmonic for the first time turned towards Oratorio.

## ENTR'ACTE

A fine musician, Douglas was temperamentally unconventional, and in no way was this more in evidence than in his manner of dress. He could on occasion be as correct in this regard as circumstances demanded, but he was his own guide in matters of this kind at all times. It is related that on one occasion a lady stopped him in the neighbourhood of Maryland Bridge, apparently at a loss in his direction. She put him on his road remarking that he did not seem to remember her.

"Well," said Douglas, "your face is familiar but I just can't place you."

"Why," replied she, "I am Mrs—————you have been our dinner guest."

A similar incident happened a few weeks later, when at an afternoon function, a lady who was in conversation with him remarked on his apparent lack of recognition, having to remind him of having been a guest at dinner with herself and her husband.

"You know," said Douglas, "I simply cannot keep tab on ladies whom I meet; they have so many different dresses and hats that I am bewildered."

"Well," was the smiling retort, "nobody can say the same about you."

Douglas himself tells of these incidents with great enjoyment. He tells of another delightful incident in Montreal. He was walking along Sherbrooke Street in that city one afternoon when he observed, about fifty yards away, a lady approaching him with her gaze steadily fixed on him. He says that his inward thought was "Good gracious! here is a lady whom I ought to know and don't. I'll raise my hat and escape by passing on." However, when she was about ten paces away, her gaze was still fastened on him and Douglas groaned to himself as she was making straight for him. As they met Douglas raised his hat with a bow and an inward prayer for help.

"Please, mister," the lady murmured, "can you spare a dime?"

Douglas Clarke in August 1929 was appointed dean of the Conservatorium of Music of McGill University, and Winnipeg

## CRESCEENDO

lost one of the most talented and lovable of men.

Peter Temple, who came here in October of that year to carry on the task of leadership initiated by his predecessors, was, like Douglas Clarke, only here for two years. He had his characteristic gifts and personality, but unlike Douglas he leaned more to the orchestral than choral side. Under his regime the two choirs more than maintained their positions. His forward orchestral policy had important bearings on choral and orchestral developments, the full effects of which were not felt until a year or two later.

Of the present conductor, Bernard Naylor, it is premature to estimate the full value of his influences. He got here early in 1932, and is, therefore, in his third season. It is safe to say, however, that the musical life of Winnipeg was never richer than it is at the present time (1934) and, Bernard's contribution to this has more than realized the high hopes that the first impressions of him engendered.

Under all these conductors, in the eleven years since the second tour, the Male Voice Choir has continued to flourish in its own characteristic manner, presenting one to three concerts each season supported by such distinguished artists as Percy Grainger, Alberto Salvi, Jacques Thibaud, Albert Spalding, Ossip Gabrilowitch, Yolando Mero, George Enesco, Reinald Werrenrath, Harold Samuel, Felix Salmond, Campbell McInnes and Boris Hamborg. They also, on May 22nd, 1926, sang for the first time in Winnipeg, Goetz' "The Water Lily" supported by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. In June 1928 they gave concerts in Minnedosa and Neepawa and again at Minnedosa in June 1930.

The development of the Philharmonic Choir and the Symphony Orchestra call for fuller review in succeeding chapters.

## CHAPTER XII

### CODA—CHORALITER

#### PHILHARMONIC CHOIR — ADOPTION BY CLUB — DEVELOPMENT.

The readiness of the Club to assume responsibilities in the interests of music in Winnipeg was again exemplified in the fall of 1929, when it took over the control and management of the Philharmonic Society (now Choir). The Philharmonic was organized in September 1922 under the conductorship of Hugh Ross. At that time the Club had decided that, for reasons already mentioned, it was not expedient that a mixed choral body should function as a section of, or be actively sponsored by, the Men's Musical Club, but that it should operate as an independent body. At the same time, when the constitution of the Philharmonic was drafted it provided for an Advisory Board of Control consisting of five members of the Club, Norman Douglas, F. C. S. Turner, F. W. Pace, D. Campbell McLachlan and Dawson Richardson.

Through this Board and the Conductor, with Stanley Osborne as Secretary, a working contact was established with the Club, and although the Philharmonic was an entirely separate and distinct organization, the Club always kept a sympathetic eye on its doings. The Advisory Board functioned in more than a merely advisory capacity, two of the members in particular, D. Campbell McLachlan and F. W. Pace, taking an active part in the direction of the Society's affairs. The first concert by the new body was given in the Board of Trade Auditorium on December 11th, 1922, before a large audience.

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The programme consisted of short choral numbers interspersed with vocal groups from Anna Case, the beautiful American soprano, and the reception accorded to the Choir was all that could be desired.

From the first the Philharmonic met with real difficulty in building up its male section. The ladies were recruited from among the cream of the city's choralists, but, with between sixty and seventy select male voices in the Male Voice Choir, a feeling was engendered that the male section of the Philharmonic could not be expected to be on the same level as the other section, an impression that was rather strengthened by suggestions to those on the waiting list for the Male Voice Choir, that they should carry on with the Philharmonic for the time being. Each successive conductor has been aware of this handicap, and has personally felt constrained to appeal to the members of the Male Voice Choir for assistance prior to practically all concerts by the Philharmonic. It was not until the season of 1932-33 that this seeming inferiority on the part of the male sections was overcome, and the Philharmonic was able, in this regard, to stand on its own feet.

All this had a direct bearing on the scope of work undertaken by the Philharmonic. Formed primarily for the production of major choral works other than Oratorio, the only works of that character that Hugh Ross felt equal to performing were Vaughan Williams' "Sea Symphony" and Brahms' "Requiem," both with orchestra. Under his regime the programmes of the Philharmonic ran more towards motets, madrigals, part songs and compositions of a miniature type.

When Douglas Clarke became conductor, he valiantly endeavoured to revert to the original idea, and in each of the two years that he was in Winnipeg had the Philharmonic perform Bach's "St. Matthew's Passion," on both occasions with orchestra. But again for each of these performances support was procured from members of the Male Voice Choir.

At this point, the end of season 1928-1929, those enthusiasts, who had been so untiring in their efforts to keep the Philharmonic flag flying, found themselves compelled by pressure of business to

## CODA — CHORALITER

pass the pleasures and responsibilities of management into other hands. The Men's Musical Club was asked to step into the breach, and on October 5th, 1929, the Club took over the reins, paid the outstanding liabilities, about \$500.00, and accepted a charge which it had deemed inexpedient to undertake seven years before. The situation, however, did not present the same problems.

During these seven years the Philharmonic had definitely established itself as the leading mixed choral body in the city; its performances both under Hugh Ross and Douglas Clarke had reached a high standard, and it had been efficiently managed, thanks to the untiring energy of Campbell McLachlan, whose enthusiasm and devotion in these years were beyond praise. There was no other choral body seriously performing major choral works, including oratorio, and the field was, therefore, much wider. It is true there was just starting the economic upheaval, but nobody expected that to last five years or more. Therefore, the Club felt called upon to be true to its ideals, and the subsequent history of the Philharmonic justifies its decision. Douglas Clarke had gone to Montreal and the new conductor was expected sometime in October.

The Committee, which had been appointed by the Club to manage the Philharmonic until such time as a more permanent executive could be arranged for, had tentatively planned for an early appearance of the Choir, as it from now on was styled, and the "Messiah" seemed the most feasible work for preparation within a limited time; but Peter Temple, when he arrived, quickly discarded that idea and substituted Bach's "Sleepers Wake" and Parry's "Blest Pair of Sirens," which were given with organ accompaniment in Grace Church on January 7th, 1930.

Several weeks later on March 25th and 26th in the Walker Theatre the Choir gave Brahms' "Song of Destiny" and Vaughan Williams' "Toward the Unknown Region," both works on this occasion being rendered with orchestral accompaniment. The situation with regard to the male sections was now noticeably improved, but some assistance was still being obtained from members of the Male Voice Choir as individuals. The orchestra also, which

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had accompanied the Choir at the Walker Theatre concerts, showed possibilities in the way of creating the foundation for a Symphony Orchestra which had not been functioning since 1927.

The story of the development of the orchestral situation is an interesting one. The efforts of the Club up to 1922 to arrive at some understanding with the Winnipeg Musicians' Association, colloquially called the "Union," towards establishing a Symphony Orchestra in Winnipeg, had indicated that the only practicable solution of the problem lay in devising some plan under which management control should lie in the hands of a business group, in a position to pay the players the regular scale of wages and otherwise direct the policy of the orchestra, including the appointment of the conductor.

Realizing this, a small committee of citizens, Mrs. J. H. Elliott, Mrs. Robert Fletcher, F. J. Anderson, H. J. Riley, H. E. Sellers, F. W. Pace, and D. Campbell McLachlan, organized the Winnipeg Orchestral Club, and, by securing sufficient subscribers to cover the cost of wages and other expenses, were able for four successive seasons to hold a series of five Sunday afternoon Symphony Orchestra concerts. The first concert was given in the Capitol Theatre on November 18th, 1923. In later years the Walker Theatre was used and also the Metropolitan Theatre, and in these four seasons Hugh Ross was the conductor. It was during the regime of the Orchestral Club, and subsequent to the visit of the Male Voice Choir to Minneapolis, that Hugh appeared in that city as Guest Conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra.

On Douglas Clarke's arrival in October 1927, it was too late to organize a series of such concerts for that season, and neither at that time nor in the succeeding year did Douglas evince that leaning to the orchestral side which he afterwards showed in Montreal. He used an orchestra as accompaniment with the Philharmonic, but he seemed to prefer to limit his attention, in the two years at least that he was in Winnipeg, to the orchestra in its relation to choral works, rather than in its symphonic character. This would doubtless have changed had his stay been longer.







PETER TEMPLE, 1920-1921



BERNARD NAYLOR



GEORGE PRICE, 1924-1925



CYRIL F. MUSGROVE, 1930-1931



DOUGLAS CLARKE, 1927-1929



HUGH ROSS, 1921-1922

WINNIPEG MALE VOICE CHOIR CONDUCTORS

## CODA—CHORALITER

With Peter Temple the situation was different. Peter had quite definite aspirations orchestrally, and it was soon apparent that there were sound reasons for an attempt being made to revive the Symphony Orchestra. Simultaneously, Peter became increasingly enthusiastic in urging a joint appearance of the Male Voice Choir, Philharmonic Choir, and a Symphony Orchestra, in the performance of an important major choral work each season. Apart from the financial aspect involved in such a proposal — and the existing economic uncertainty made this important — other complicated considerations entered into the problem.

There were many members in the Male Voice Choir who much preferred male choral to mixed choir work, and others who, proud of their association with the choir and what it stood for, looked askance at any scheme which threatened even temporary loss of the choir's identity. In the Philharmonic the ladies, who had never been so well supported in the male section as their own strength deserved, felt attracted by the prospect of receiving such support as the addition of the Male Voice Choir could give, while the male members of the Philharmonic could hardly object because of their numerical weakness, but on the other hand they would feel, somewhat naturally it must be admitted, that their identity was also threatened.

Such a merger tended to weaken the morale, the *esprit de corps*, of the Philharmonic at a time when it looked as if a new lease of life was being taken. The Club, however, has always believed that, in bringing these young English conductors to Winnipeg, it was providing a leadership in a broad sense, someone to make the "pace on the road to excellence" and that the best results could only be obtained by endeavouring so far as it reasonably could go, to follow that lead, especially when definitely given.

Another factor which had an important bearing on the Club's attitude, was the fact that the development of the talkies, involving the almost total disappearance of the theatre orchestras, coupled with the increasing scope of the radio, had created a deplorable state of unemployment for many orchestra musicians, and their

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circumstances had become quite serious. The situation which confronted the Club in the summer of 1930 was, therefore, one which called for a bold comprehensive policy, coupled with the courage necessary to carry it through.

It was believed, however, that, despite the large financial risk involved, the following possessed by the Male Voice and Philharmonic Choirs, assisted by those who supported the four season's series of Sunday Symphony Orchestra Concerts under Hugh Ross, warranted the Club embarking on a venture to provide Winnipeg with a series of concerts, which would include five Symphony Orchestra Concerts, two Concerts by the Male Voice Choir supported by the Symphony Orchestra, and two concerts by the Philharmonic and Male Voice Choirs combined, supported by the Symphony Orchestra.

It was decided, therefore, to listen to Peter Temple's call, and the co-operation of the members of the Male Voice Choir, and Philharmonic Choir having been obtained, it organized the M.M.C. Concert Series and this was carried out in the season of 1930-1931. A definite contract was made with the members of the Orchestra as a body, and by the time Peter Temple returned from England in September — he had been there on holiday during the summer — all plans were complete.

The whole series of nine concerts was given in the Playhouse Theatre, and, while the attendance of the public did not reach expectations, and there was a financial deficit, the musical results were all that the Club could have hoped for. The Symphony Orchestra programmes were built on conventional lines, and the orchestra acquitted itself with credit. The Male Voice Choir, besides singing some characteristic numbers, presented for the first time in Winnipeg, Hadley's "Nightfall" with the orchestra, and also sang, with orchestra for the first time, Stanford's "Songs of the Sea." The Philharmonic and Male Voice Choirs' combined programme included, for the first time in Winnipeg, Holst's "Hymn of Jesus."

In sponsoring the revival of the Symphony Orchestra and in forming a large representative mixed chorus through the combination

## CODA—CHORALITER

of the two choirs, the Club accomplished what it set out to do, and their courage in doing so had a definite bearing on musical life which in due course made itself felt. Peter Temple in the fall of 1931 found it inexpedient to return from England and cabled his resignation. His successor, Bernard Naylor, was delayed in leaving and did not arrive in Winnipeg until early in 1932, too late to carry out any major schemes in the short time available before the end of the season; but in the following season, 1932-1933, the musical structure took on a definitely constructive character.

Out of the experiences of the former Orchestral Club, which operated on a wage-paying basis costing \$1,000 to \$1,200.00 per concert, and of the Men's Musical Club, which contracted with the Orchestra on a flat basis of \$800.00 per concert, it clearly emerged that, under existing financial conditions, neither plan could succeed, and Bernard Naylor, after an enormous amount of persevering persuasion, was able to induce the Union to consent to the members of the Orchestra agreeing to play in a series of five Sunday Symphony Orchestra concerts on a co-operative and profit-sharing basis, under which any surplus available after all expenses were paid would be divided among the players.

This was a remarkable change of mind within a few years, and bears evidence of much broader vision in the Union itself, as well as of the tenacity of mind and personal magnetism of Bernard Naylor. For two seasons, therefore, 1932-33 and 1933-34, Winnipeg was able to enjoy a series of five Symphony Orchestra Concerts each season. Further, the Male Voice Choir was enabled to function along its own specialized line without any threat of absorption.

In the case of the Philharmonic, the situation was rather more critical and, in the absence of an assured accretion to the ranks of the male sections, there was a definite suggestion to convert the Choir into a female voice organization. However, the executive believed that there was a real demand for a large mixed chorus, and this would be demonstrated if some well-known major work were put into preparation. They boldly approved of a revival of the "Messiah." The conductor did not have the same hesitancy as his

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predecessor — doubtless he contemplated the more modern interpretation which he finally gave to it — and when this oratorio was rendered on February 27th, 1932, the male sections more nearly balanced the other sections than had ever been the case previously in the history of the Choir.

In the following season, 1933-1934, the Philharmonic numbered over two hundred voices, the balance of all parts was all that could be desired, and highly satisfactory performances were given of the "Messiah" and the "Creation" with orchestra.

## CHAPTER XIII

# MARCH PAST

### REVIEW OF CLUB'S ACTIVITIES.

The end of season 1933-34, therefore, saw the completion of nineteen years of regular Members' Recitals—over four hundred—by the Men's Musical Club.

The Winnipeg Male Voice Choir, with seventy voices, has more than maintained, after nineteen years, its high standard of performance.

The Music and Arts Building is still the home of the Club, as it has been for eighteen years.

The Manitoba Musical Competition Festival has passed its Sixteenth Annual milestone, and, with 1,071 entries, 11,301 individual competitors, and 31,000 estimated public admissions, still holds its prominent position among festivals throughout the Empire, and is one of the major annual events of the year in civic life.

The Winnipeg Boys' Choir, fifty-five strong, nine years old, and the youngest of the family, has no parallel in Western Canada, nor, it is believed, in the Dominion.

The Winnipeg Philharmonic Choir, the adopted child, now twelve years of age, and with over two hundred voices, is firmly established as the leading mixed choral body in the city.

Each of these activities is imbued with its own proper keen desire to rise to greater heights of artistic endeavour, yet is animated with the common spirit of one for all, and all for one, in promoting the aspirations and efforts of the Club towards the permeation of a broader cultural sensibility throughout the community.

## CHAPTER XIV

### POSTLUDE

#### IS WINNIPEG MUSICAL ? — THE ACID TEST.

In the fall of 1933 there appeared in a leading British Journal an article by a Canadian Musician in which Canadians were roundly accused of taking unto themselves as a nation unwarrantable credit for being a musical people. The writer's name was not disclosed but the journal in question would hardly have given the article prominence without accurate knowledge of the author's standing. The exclusive mention of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Mendelssohn Choir, and one small school Musical Competition Festival in Ontario, contrasted with an entire lack of mention of any other specific activity in the Dominion, seems to suggest the domicile from whose sheltered study window the critic gazed on the scene within his vision.

The preeminent status in the Empire conceded to the Manitoba Musical Competition Festival, the position on this continent and reputation in the British Isles accorded to the Winnipeg Male Voice Choir, the high standard of performance by the Winnipeg Boys' Choir, compared with that of other boys' choirs which have visited Canada, the performances of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and of the Winnipeg Philharmonic Choir, and the unmistakable intelligent reaction in Winnipeg audiences to what is taking place on the platform, can all justifiably be advanced as evidence that the percentage of Winnipeg citizens taking an intel-



## POSTLUDE

ligent part in music-making is well above the average, and by that yardstick Winnipeg can be regarded as a musical city.

The point is not, however, worth labouring; too much stress on it might engender that complacency, that smugness or self sufficiency so deadly in its strangling effect on real musical sensibility, so prone to the cultivation of a pose that ultimately contents itself with the reputation of the performer rather than the performance itself.

What then is the Acid Test by which the musical status of a city shall be measured? Is it to be gauged by the size of the audiences that attend performances by high-priced musicians surrounded by all the glamour of a world-wide reputation? Or by the amount of money that such musicians can attract in a city like Winnipeg? Or by the number of such visits that can be absorbed in a season?

Does the acid test of a city's musical life not rather lie in the number of citizens engaged in a personal participation in active music-making of some kind or other, in the standard of music performed on its platforms, in the recognition accorded to the public performances of its own groups of citizens, in its ability to give the lie to the saying that a prophet has no honour in his own country?

It is surely more important that each year there should be half a dozen performances of symphonic works by a Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra instead of visits at intervals of years by costly visiting orchestras!

It is surely of prime importance that there should be regular performances of choral works by the people themselves, more especially when it is economically impossible to have them any other way!

It is surely vital that the children through their school music, their children's choirs, orchestras, and bands should be taken along the right road!

It is surely desirable that general audiences should be as discriminating as possible, and able, in more or less degree, to recognize music, as music, and not merely a performance by a name!

Visits by great musicians are essential to musical development. They satisfy the aspirations of the specialist, and, in general, make

## CRESCE~~N~~DO

the pace on the road to high achievement. Without them musical life would be in danger of stagnation. The extraordinary development of the performances at the Annual Musical Competition Festival is largely due to the inspiration of the visiting adjudicators.

But if the people let up in their music-making, if they drop out of the race, and content themselves with watching these pace-makers, if the general public fail to spur on their own orchestra, choirs, bands, and other musicians, simply because they are their own, Winnipeg, or any other city for that part of it, will gradually become a home of poseurs and unworthy of the name of a musical city.

## CHAPTER XV

### L'ENVOI

THE OTHER ALONE — 1915-1916 AND 1933-1934.

It was the merry month of May in the year of grace, 1934. The commonplace sort of individual, now past middle-age, was ruminating in the quiet of his home. The trees were covered with their first sheen of green, the air was tremulous with the singing of birds. His old friend, Joe Tees, had been gathered to his fathers; the old gramophone stood in its corner discarded and silent; it was the age of radio.

"Well, old sport," said he to his inner self. "Another season has come and gone; surely in these days you are getting your fill of music with the kindred spirits you once talked about."

"True, O King," said the old sport, "it would do Joe's heart good to come back and see what the fates have made of his modest little star-hitched wagon. With all the improvements and additions it's now a six-cylinder wonder."

"Now, let's see," he murmured, "suppose we get a sheet of paper and draw pictures of the 1915-1916 model and of the 1933-1934 model, as well as of other contemporary vehicles and see what we get."

So they drew up to the table, sharpened the pencil and got busy. The sketches are illuminating:

## CRESCENDO

1915-1916

### *Orchestral*

Rutherford Studio Orchestra

### *Choral*

Winnipeg Oratorio Society

Elgar Musical Society

### *Operatic*

Dr. Horner's Opera Company  
(*Mikado*)

### *Seasonal*

Women's Musical Club

Junior Musical Club

Men's Musical Club

### *Visiting Artists*

Katherine Goodson

Kathleen Parlow

Cherniavsky Trio

1933-1934

### *Orchestral*

Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra,  
5 Concerts.

Padwick's Canadian School  
Orchestra, 2 Concerts.

Winnipeg String Orchestra.

Rutherford's Studio Orchestra

### *Choral*

Winnipeg Philharmonic Choir

Winnipeg Male Voice Choir.

Winnipeg Boys' Choir.

St. John's Post Graduates' Choir

### *Operatic*

Daniel McIntyre Collegiate  
(*Pinafore*)

University Glee Club (*Mikado*)

Lyric Club (*Toreador*)

Back To The Land Assoc.  
(*Belle of New York*)

Winnipeg Light Opera Co.  
(*Chimes of Normandy*)

### *Seasonal*

Women's Musical Club

Junior Musical Club

Men's Musical Club

Wednesday Morning Musicales.

### *Visiting Artists*

Lily Pons

Lawrence Tibbett

Guiomar Novaes

## L'ENVOI

1915-1916

1933-1934

John Goss and his London Singers  
London String Quartet  
Yehudi Menuhin  
Ossip Gabrilowitch  
Roland Hayes  
Mischa Elman  
Doris Kenyon  
Myra Hess  
Paris Instrumental Quintet  
Hart House String Quartet  
Ninon Vallin  
Ellen Ballon  
Alfred Hirsh

*General*

*General*

Manitoba Musical Competition  
Festival.

As the contrasting pictures took shape, the look of content in his eyes deepened, and, as he finished, he sighed and whispered:

"Well, old sport, we can still climb higher on the road we are travelling, but we are getting on, we are getting on."



## APPENDIXES





## APPENDIX A

### MEN'S MUSICAL CLUB

#### CHARTER MEMBERS, 1915-1916.

Armes, Dr. H. P.	Fraser, W. G.	Love, W. D.
Anderson, W. H.	Ferguson, Rev. W. A.	Logan, Peter
Atkins, Ernest		Lewis, F. H.
Arnold, W. S.	Gilbert, E.	
Aldridge, W.	Garnet, A.	McKenzie, B. S.
	Gee, F. M.	Manuel, John
Berry, Bert C.	Goodman, W. E.	Mitchell, Jos.
Brooks, I. F.	Gerrard, R. K.	Mattice, J. G.
Bardal, Paul	Guild, C.	Martin, A. J.
Barratt, Geo.	Grieve, A.	Mathieson, G. S.
Brown, A. C.	Gibson, K.	Mills, R. Watkin
Bull, H. P.		Malcolm, P.
Birch, R. E.	Hay, A. Thomson	Moncrieff, J. J.
Brooker, B. R.	Harris, H. H.	Marshall, R. D.
Burt, A. R.	Horner, Dr. R.	Munford, G. T.
Boden, W.	Hogg, C. R.	Mainer, J. T.
Burgess, J. E.	Hughes, F. H.	
Baly, E. H.	Heaton, L. D.	Norris-Elye, L. T. S.
Brown, Bartley	Hindle, R. F.	Naftel, H. St. J.
	Hall, H. Cecil	
Coombes, Dean	Hughes, J. E.	Osborn, F. H.
Couture, Camille	Harriman, F. J.	Osborne, S. P. A.
Chidwick, C. R.		
Cole, Harold	Isherwood, J.	Parton, J.
Crowley, J.	Isaacs, H. Rufus	Price, G. H.
Carr, W.		Pellenz, B. P.
Coombes, G. L.	Jones, J. E.	Probert, W. J.
Chisholm, J. J.	Jamieson, Rhynd	Pace, F. W.
	Jackson, W.	
Douglas, A. N.	Kennedy, F. C. N.	Perkins, Jas.
Eddy, W. G.	Long, W. J.	Rennie, Hugh
Fanshaw, A. J. J.	Lee, Thos.	Rutherford, W. G.
		Richardson, H.

## APPENDIX A

Steen, Chas. J.  
Sykes, Geo.  
Stirling, John  
Stewart, D. C.  
Stovel, C. D.  
Saunders, W. J.  
Stead, Basil  
Scott, A. L.  
Shadwick, Phillip  
Sherwood, E. G.  
Sprankling, J. G.  
Scott, R. Russell  
Sadler, H. J.

Smith, T. Duff  
Suffield, J. D.  
Thomson, J. L. M.  
Todd, P. S.  
Thompson, R. J.  
Tees, J. M.  
Turner, F. C. S.  
Thomson, W. Davidson  
Vincent, Swale  
Villardson, J.  
Vincent, Cecil J.  
Vinen, E. E.

Williams, G. H.  
Waugh, R. L.  
Woodley, J. R.  
Waterhouse, J.  
Wagg, Geo. H.  
Wheeler, C. H.  
West, North  
Wakeman, A.  
York, J.  
Zimmerman, A. A.

## APPENDIX B

### MEN'S MUSICAL CLUB

PRESIDENT — TREASURER — SECRETARY — 1915-1934.

	<i>President</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
1915-1916	Dean Coombes	F. C. N. Kennedy
1916-1917	Dean Coombes	F. C. N. Kennedy
1917-1918	R. Watkin Mills	J. Parton
1918-1919	R. Watkin Mills	J. Parton
		B. F. Griggs (Oct. 26th)
1919-1920	Dr. Swale Vincent	B. F. Griggs
1920-1921	F. H. Hughes	H. J. Martin
		C. B. Clement (Sept. 1st)
1921-1922	A. Norman Douglas	C. B. Clement
1922-1923	A. Norman Douglas	D. S. Lofthouse
1923-1924	Leonard D. Heaton	D. S. Lofthouse
1924-1925	Leonard D. Heaton	A. Thomson Hay
1925-1926	Fred C. O'brien	A. Thomson Hay
1926-1927	Fred C. O'Brien	A. Thomson Hay
1927-1928	N. J. Abbott	A. Adams
1928-1929	N. J. Abbott	A. Adams
1929-1930	N. J. Abbott	A. Adams
1930-1931	F. C. S. Turner	Thos. Roberts
1931-1932	F. C. S. Turner	Thos. Roberts
1932-1933	J. Preudhomme	Geo. M. Hay
1933-1934	J. Preudhomme	Geo. M. Hay

#### *Secretary*

1915-1916	Joseph M. Tees
1916-1934	Geo. S. Mathieson

## APPENDIX C

### MALE VOICE CHOIR

#### MALE VOICE CHOIR OFFICERS, 1916-1934.

	<i>Chairman</i>	<i>Secretary-Treasurer</i>
1916-1917	George Price	W. J. Saunders
1917-1918	John Parton	W. J. Saunders
		R. D. Marshall (Aug. 27th)
1918-1919	John Parton	R. D. Marshall
		F. C. O'Brien (Sept. 4th)
1919-1920	Bartley Brown	F. C. O'Brien
1920-1921	F. C. S. Turner	F. C. O'Brien
1921-1922	F. C. S. Turner	F. C. O'Brien
1922-1923	F. C. S. Turner	F. C. O'Brien
1923-1924	F. C. S. Turner	P. A. Gibbs
1924-1925	F. C. S. Turner	P. A. Gibbs
1925-1926	F. C. S. Turner	W. A. Stapley
1926-1927	W. A. Stapley	A. V. Dingle
1927-1928	W. A. Stapley	A. V. Dingle
1928-1929	Norman Douglas	A. V. Dingle
1929-1930	Norman Douglas	A. V. Dingle
1930-1931	Norman Douglas	A. V. Dingle
1931-1932	J. G. Fraser	R. W. Cooke
1932-1933	J. G. Fraser	R. W. Cooke
1933-1934	J. G. Fraser	R. W. Cooke

#### *Conductor*

1916-1919	George Price
1919-1920	George Price
	Alex. L. Scott
	Bartley Brown
1920-1921	Cyril F. Musgrove
1921-1922	Norman Douglas
	Hugh C. M. Ross
1922-1927	Hugh C. M. Ross
1927-1929	Douglas Clarke
1929-1931	Peter Temple
1931-1934	Bernard Naylor

## APPENDIX D

### FESTIVAL ADJUDICATORS

1919	Dr. H. A. Fricker, <i>Toronto</i>	T. Tertius Noble, <i>New York</i>
1920	Dr. H. A. Fricker, <i>Toronto</i>	T. Tertius Noble, <i>New York</i>
1921	Dr. A. S. Vogt, <i>Toronto</i>	Dr. H. C. Perrin, <i>Montreal</i>
1922	Dr. A. S. Vogt, <i>Toronto</i>	T. Tertius Noble, <i>New York</i>
1923	H. Plunket Greene, <i>London</i> Granville Bantock, <i>Birmingham</i>	T. Tertius Noble, <i>New York</i>
1924	Dr. James Lyon, <i>Wallasey</i> Herbert Fryer, <i>London</i>	Dr. H. A. Fricker, <i>Toronto</i>
1925	Dr. James Lyon, <i>Wallasey</i> T. Tertius Noble, <i>New York</i>	F. S. Welsman, <i>Toronto</i>
1926	Sir Hugh Robertson, <i>Glasgow</i> J. Campbell McInnes, <i>Toronto</i>	F. S. Welsman, <i>Toronto</i>
1927	Dr. J. Frederic Staton, <i>Chesterfield</i> Thos. F. Dunhill, <i>London</i>	Edgar L. Bainton, <i>Newcastle-on-Tyne</i>
1928	Sir Hugh Robertson, <i>Glasgow</i> J. Peebles Conn, <i>Glasgow</i>	Dr. E. C. Bairdow, <i>York</i>
1929	Arthur Collingwood, <i>Aberdeen</i> J. Peebles Conn, <i>Glasgow</i>	J. Campbell McInnes, <i>Toronto</i> Dr. E. C. McMillan, <i>Toronto</i>
1930	Dr. J. Frederic Staton, <i>Chesterfield</i> Dr. Albert Tysoe, <i>Leeds</i>	Edgar L. Bainton, <i>Newcastle-on-Tyne</i> Dr. E. C. McMillan, <i>Toronto</i>
1931	Sir Hugh Robertson, <i>Glasgow</i> H. Plunket Greene, <i>London</i>	Harold Samuel, <i>London</i> Maurice Jacobson, <i>London</i>
1932	Dr. Thomas Armstrong, <i>Exeter</i> H. Plunket Greene, <i>London</i>	Harold Samuel, <i>London</i> Maurice Jacobson, <i>London</i>
1933	Dr. J. Frederic Staton, <i>Chesterfield</i> George Dodds, <i>Newcastle-on-Tyne</i>	York Bowen, <i>London</i>
1934	Sir Hugh Robertson, <i>Glasgow</i> Dr. Percy C. Hull, <i>Hereford</i>	Thos. F. Dunhill, <i>London</i>

# MANITOBA MUSICAL COMPETITION FESTIVAL

## STATISTICS.

Year	Date	Days	Classes	Entries	Individual Competitors	Estimated Public Admissions	Main Auditorium
1.—1919	May 13-16	4	38	274	2500	2000	Central Church
2.—1920	March 15-19	5	44	277	3900	2500	Central Church
3.—1921	April 11-15	5	44	306	3800	5000	Central Church
4.—1922	May 8-13	6	64	422	6000	7000	Board of Trade
5.—1923	May 7-12	6	71	355	5000	9000	Board of Trade
6.—1924	May 5-10	6	86	454	6100	8500	Board of Trade
7.—1925	April 30 - May 9	9	98	484	6700	11000	Board of Trade
8.—1926	April 29 - May 8	9	114	565	8550	12000	Central Church
9.—1927	April 26 - May 7	11	121	694	8457	15000	Central Church
10.—1928	April 23 - May 5	12	133	763	8523	21000	Central Church
11.—1929	April 15-27	12	156	833	7828	22000	Central Church
12.—1930	May 5-17	12	165	1080	10670	25000	Central Church
13.—1931	April 20 - May 2	12	175	1190	10302	24000	Playhouse
14.—1932	April 11-23	12	185	1197	10049	17000	Playhouse
15.—1933	May 8-20	12	182	1168	9028	19000	Auditorium
16.—1934	April 14-28	13	187	1171	11301	31000	Auditorium

## APPENDIX E













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G Sharp

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G. Sharp Major

Crescendo; a business man's ro

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